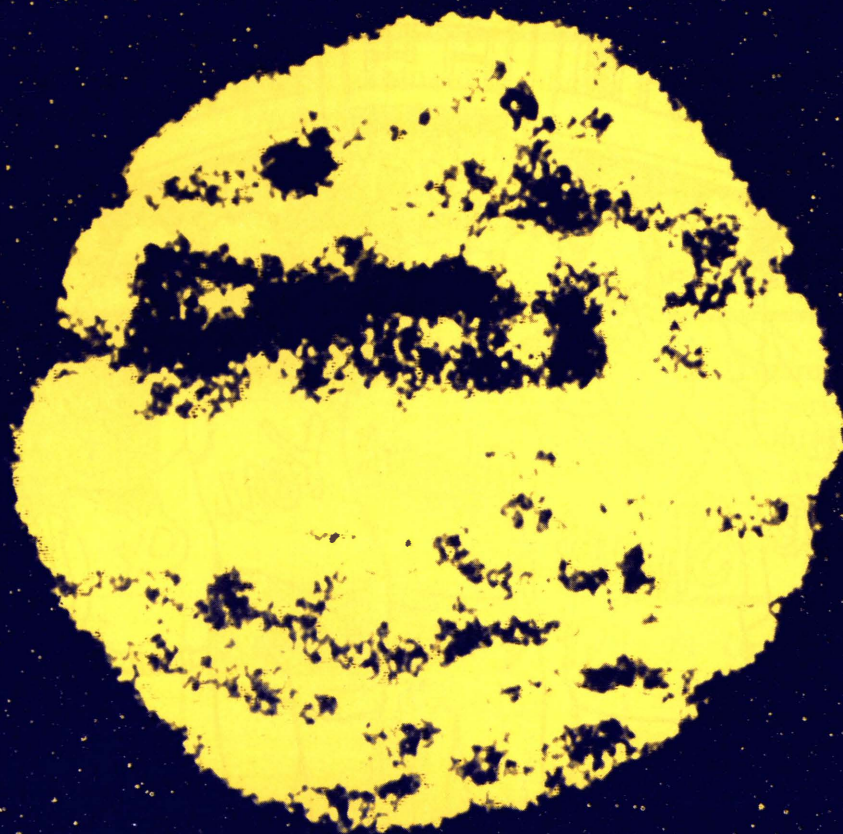


ALPHA

60p

May/June 1979

PROBES THE PARANORMAL



**“Venus can’t fly around you,
over you and under you...”**

Captain Bill Startup, pilot of Australian plane carrying T.V. film crew.

Korchnoi’s Complaint

Lyall Watson—mystery voyager



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May/June 1979

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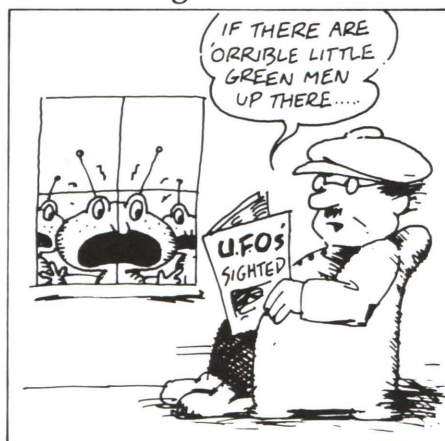
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High flying claims

"THIS may turn out to be quite a year for the paranormal." As far as we know, Dr John Nicholson of the British Psychological Society was not making a cryptic reference to ALPHA, but merely reflecting in January of this year on the disquieting aspects of the Transcendental Meditation programme's expensive flying lessons.

You do not need a pilot's license for a TM take-off, just an open mind and an open wallet – the course will set you back between £500 and £1,200.

Depressed minority

FAR from being a universal panacea, TM can cause problems for some people. A substantial minority of meditators developed anxiety, depression and other tension symptoms, according to a survey carried out by American psychologist, Leon Otis and reported in February's *Psychology Today*.

His investigation followed an earlier look at TM in 1974 when he discovered that some people reported adverse reactions.

One study of 219 people training to become TM teachers showed that 111 who had been meditating for about four years had the most frequent and severe side effects that were not just the transitory problems of what in TM terminology is called "unstressing".

Yet he insists that this does not mean that TM is of no value to others. "I do not want to discourage people from taking up TM. It is clearly of benefit to many people. In our survey samples, approximately 52 to 64 per cent of the subjects who continued the practice did not list a single adverse effect as defined in our study."

Test of faith

THE BEST that can be said for Brian Williams, the self-dubbed Minister of Healing, is that he put himself to the test knowingly. Worried by Williams' extravagant claims for his healing powers, the Rt. Rev. Hugh Montefiore, Bishop of Birmingham, challenged him to demonstrate his abilities.

Williams, who is based in Hall Green, Birmingham, accepted. People suffering from a variety of illnesses and conditions, including blindness and deafness, turned up for the session. The hoped for improvements were not

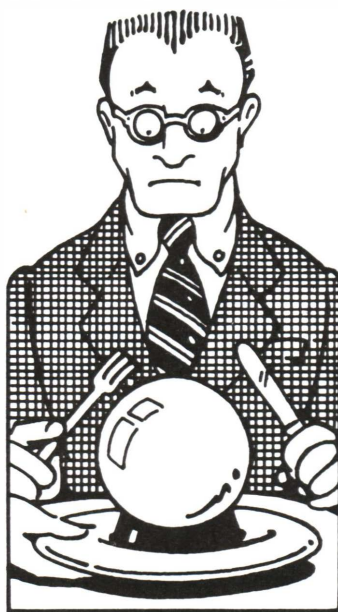
The *Sunday People* quoted a spokesman for the Bishop as say-

ing, "Christ's name is being brought into disrepute by Mr Williams' wild claims. He is completely deluded about his healing powers."

Psyched out in New York

New York's psychic business is booming according to *New York* magazine, January 15.

"Five years ago, going to a psychic was considered the act of a silly, unstable person. Today it is accepted as an interesting chic thing to do," says Terry Clifford. This new-found enthusiasm extends to all sorts of people, including executives and psychiatrists, claims the article. It has led to a growth in the number of organisations specialising in psychic development. One school, Awareness Inc., opened its doors just two years ago and now has over 2,000 students.



The article records the rather inconsistent results that Terry Clifford obtained from consulting a selection of New York's clairvoyants and sensitives. Apparently, psychics and mediums are not only to be found in Spiritualist churches and other predictable centres. They are increasingly likely to be encountered in restaurants and cafes ready to give patrons something more than a meal to chew over.

Doctor Dixon's dilemma

Dowsing has caused a nice editorial problem for the *New Scientist*. The 8 February issue seems to want things both ways. While a feature article proclaims that *Dowsing achieves new credence*, the ancient art does not come off so well in another part of the magazine.

The *new credence* article looks at the research done in Russia and elsewhere over the past ten years or so which shows that dowsing works and is useful for locating subterranean water and mineral deposits. Rather coyly, though, the Russians prefer to use the more technical-sounding phrase "Bio-Physical Method" to describe the technique. But it is the technique, not the name it's given, that counts as the impressive Russian results show.

In one case, four dowsers identified 1,120 likely sites for sinking water wells in a particular region near Cheliabinsk while 158 sites were identified by the more conventional geophysical method. Dowsed sites scored significantly higher: only 6 to 8% turned out to be dry, against 12.7% of those located geophysically.

This project, and others reported in the article, highlighted the value of dowsing, sorry, BPM, to surveyors and prospectors. What stumped the Russians was the scientific explanation for the effectiveness of the technique. One school suggests that dowsing reactions could be "direct physiological responses to small changes in the environment". Other Russian scientists believe that dowsers respond to small changes in the electromagnetic field.

But whatever the explanation, the ability to dowse seems to be extremely general, if experiments in Utah State University are anything to go by. 99% of the novice dowsers they tested in one experiment showed dowsing reactions.

After conceding the fact that the evidence suggests that there was more to dowsing than might have been suspected, the author of the article rather testily complains that "there are few facts" to go on.

He makes the sensible suggestion that that should not stand in the way of the fuller exploitation of something as valuable as dowsing, and adds that "The thesis that dowsing should be investigated in the context of electro-magnetism surely deserves a more comprehensive experimental treatment". In his November *Nature* paper, Professor John Taylor concluded this to be a dead-end avenue of research, though.

More in keeping with the savaging that most "unscientific" techniques, like dowsing, normally receives is the tone of Martin Goldman's review of Francis Hitching's *The World Atlas of Mysteries*, in the same issue. Part of the jibing the reviewer indulges in includes the scornful regard for Hitching's claim that dowsers can detect tiny fluctuations in the

earth's magnetic fields.

Quite right! Why believe old wives' tales about dowsing? Now, if you want to have a serious scientific discussion about BPM, that is another matter.

Dream saves her life?

IT was 5 a.m. when Helen Tillotson heard knocking on her door. As she stirred from her bed Helen, 26, heard her mother's voice shout, "Helen, are you there? Let me in." Mrs Marjorie Tillotson lived in a block of Philadelphia apartments, across the street from her daughter.

Once she was in the flat Mrs Tillotson demanded to know why her daughter had been knocking on her door a few minutes earlier and calling for her to follow her home without asking questions.

Helen denied that she had been anywhere near her mother's flat. She had gone to bed at 11 p.m. the previous night and had not got up until she heard knocking at her door.

"But I saw you. I spoke to you," Mrs Tillotson insisted.

At that moment there was a loud explosion and the two women rushed to the window to see what had happened. A gas leak in Mrs Tillotson's apartment block had caused the explosion and her flat was totally gutted.

Fire chief Rudolph Adler said: "If she had been asleep there at the time I doubt whether she would have got out alive."

Was it a case of sleep-walking? Or a prophetic dream? Whatever the explanation, it seems to have saved Mrs Tillotson's life.

(Source: *Sunday Express*, February 11, 1979.)

Premonitions pour in

THE ALPHA Premonitions Bureau attracted a lot of media interest after our first issue appeared, and as a result of a story in the *Sun* newspaper the bureau has received over 100 reports.

The majority of respondents so far have reported premonitions that have occurred and been confirmed – some as much as ten years old. These make fascinating reading but are outside the scope of *Alpha's* one-year pilot study.

What we are interested in receiving are premonitions of events which have yet to happen, so that the bureau can record them and provide independent confirmation that the individual concerned forecast the event in

advance. We have a small number of such premonitions already and these will be monitored, with the co-operation of the individuals who have filed them.

While welcoming premonition reports, it is important that our requirements are understood. To be verifiable, a premonition needs to be not only about a specific event but also about an event which is unexpected. We have received forewarnings of a global and political nature which, though passed to us in all sincerity, are totally useless because they are no more than generalisations.

Similarly, reports of planes crashing or ships colliding are meaningless unless the premonition also provides some means of identifying the incident when it occurs – either geographically or with details about the nature of the event which cannot apply to similar accidents.

Finally, many people who have contacted the bureau are very disturbed by dreams they have had. Some depict violent incidents occurring either to the dreamer or the dreamer's family, and they ask if they are premonitions.

The blunt answer, of course, is that they are only premonitions if the events depicted do happen at a later date, but that is no consolation to the dreamer.

What has to be realised is that nightmares are much more common than premonitions and the likelihood is that the worries, fears and repressions of the dreamers concerned have produced these frightening visions. But those who feel their dream is significant should report it to us immediately.

Address your report, with as much information as possible, to Alpha Premonitions Bureau, 20 Regent Street, Fleet, Hants GU13 9NR.

Twin coincidences

TWINS who were parted at birth, when their parents arranged for them to be adopted, have been reunited in America after 39 years. They prove to be identical in more than looks. Both are six foot tall and weigh 12 stone 12 pounds. Their mannerisms, stance and speech are also said to be exactly the same.

The twins – whose surnames are now Springer and Lewis – are proving to be of great interest to psychologists who are trying to solve the age-old question of whether our behaviour is shaped by hereditary or environmental factors.

The families who adopted the boys were each told that the other

twin had died at birth, but the Lewis family discovered the other brother was alive while they were completing adoption papers. But it took several court orders before the Ohio authorities agreed to make the two men aware of the other's existence. Even then, they waited a month before meeting.

When they did get together they found that the similarities between them were quite remarkable, entering the Koestler world of synchronicity.

They discovered that both their adoptive parents had named them James. Each had married and divorced women named Linda. They were both employed in police and security work. Their first sons were each named James Allan. Both had remarried women named Betty. Even their hobbies were the same: mechanical drawing and carpentry.

These striking coincidences cannot be explained in terms of heredity or environmental conditioning.

(Source: *Daily Express*, March 10.)

Patients get the point

A £2,500 GRANT from a private family trust has made hospital trials of acupuncture possible. 100 patients with osteo-arthritis are being treated at Poole General Hospital, Dorset.

Half of them are having conventional treatment for the disease, the other 50 are receiving acupuncture, involving passing electrical currents through needles inserted in the skin.

The trials were featured on a BBC 1 TV programme in southern England, called "All Together Now", on February 2, which dealt with a number of alternative treatments which are being studied by medical people.

Some of the participants belonged to the Scientific and Medical Network, an association of doctors and scientists whose members are disillusioned with the materialist philosophy of science and medicine, which was formed in 1973.

One Network member, Dr Marianne – a Bournemouth GP – talked about her work with homeopathy.

Two patients were also present in the TV studio to testify to the help they had received from unorthodox treatment. Bill Curling, better known as newspaper racing columnist "Hotspur", who once suffered from arthritis in his hands, said he had received "tremendous help from acupuncture".

Spiritual healer Ted Fricker was named as the person responsible for the very remark-

able cure of Mrs Joyce Pearce. In 1973 she had an accident with a washing machine which left her arm in a terrible mangled condition "like spaghetti". She had operations to transplant nerves into the mutilated limb but there was a limit to what the surgeons could achieve. After surgery was complete only her fingers worked.

Mrs Pearce then went to see Fricker, and after each treatment there was an improvement. Today her arm is back to normal and she works on petrol pumps in a service station. Her general practitioner, Dr Leslie Adams, described her cure as "miraculous".

The unkindest cut of all?

PSYCHIC surgery has received enthusiastic endorsement and equally scathing dismissal. A fresh episode in the continuing controversy was added in January when it became known that Antonio "Dr Tony" Agpao, one of the world's most well-known psychic surgeons, had resorted to the surgeon's knife.

The man who has made a fortune from "operating" on thousands of sick people at his centre in Baguio, near Manila in the Philippines, and compared to Christ for his miracles, was admitted to hospital, under an assumed name, for an appendix operation. Much to the surprise of some of his supporters, he made no attempt to consult any of his fellow Filipino psychic surgeons beforehand. He is reported to have confided professionally to the surgeon who operated on him: "You know, doc, physicians can't heal themselves."

Healing or surgery?

MORE NEWS about David and Helen Elizalde, who are just about to descend upon Britain to carry out their special brand of psychic treatment (see *Alpha*, issue 1).

The Elizaldes, from Australia (though David is a Filipino and Helen was born in England of Cypriot parentage) are reputed to have the ability to conduct psychic surgery on their patients.

During their first visit to Britain, last year, they opened bodies with their bare hands, extracted bloody matter, then caused the wounds to heal instantly. Most of their patients were impressed and some reported quite remarkable improvement in their conditions. But James Randi, conjurer and arch-sceptic, showed on televi-

sion how it could all be done by sleight-of-hand.

Once again the Spiritualists' National Union is sponsoring their visit. But interestingly, in the literature which the union has issued, it describes them as "psychic healers" and not as "psychic surgeons," which is the more usual label given to such practitioners.

Perhaps they have in mind that it is illegal for anyone to "pretend to be registered" as a qualified medical practitioner and the use of the word "surgeon" may imply that to some minds – even though it is qualified with the word "psychic".

But apart from that, the Law Society told *Alpha*, there is no legislation which could prevent them from "cutting" people up and treating them in a way which mimics surgery. Perhaps there could be a case brought against them for "grievous bodily harm" if anything went wrong, but even that would be unlikely since the patient volunteers to have psychic surgery and is aware of what will happen.

The dates of their visit are as follows (and not as they appeared in issue 1): For the whole of May they will be seeing patients at the SNU's Stansted Hall headquarters in Essex. From June 4-9 they will perform at the Edinburgh Spiritualist Church. They move on to the Westbury Park Spiritualist Church, Bristol, for the period June 18-23. Finally, they return to Stansted Hall for four days of healing, from July 2-6.

Those who want to undergo psychic surgery at their hands have to make a prior appointment and pay a £10 "donation" which is to cover the cost of bringing the couple from Australia.

Alpha – and others – have called for a scientific and medical examination of the Elizaldes' alleged powers (which if real would be of tremendous significance), but we are discouraged to learn from the SNU's literature that, apart from two union members who are State Registered Nurses, "no other (sic) unauthorised persons will be permitted in the Sanctuary at Stansted Hall or in the churches. Visitors for appointments can, of course, be accompanied by another person and this should be stated on the application form."

One of the first patients may well be SNU president Gordon Higginson, who underwent psychic surgery during the Elizaldes' first visit. He did not tell them was wrong. His legs were swollen and his doctor attributed this to excess fluid.

David Elizalde told Higginson that the cause was too much sugar in his body water, and this was confirmed.

After the psychic surgery Higginson sent his blood-stained underpants to a friend at a local hospital to have the blood analysed in its laboratories. Analysis showed that it was human blood (sceptics claim that psychic surgeons use animal blood to produce their effects by trickery) but because it was diluted it was impossible to specify the blood group.

In March Higginson had to cancel engagements for three weeks and stay in bed because of painful phlebitis. It will be interesting to see if the Elizaldes can cure him.

Meanwhile, it remains to be seen whether the SNU will decide to allow independent and medically qualified observers to watch the Elizaldes at work during their extended stay.

Rosemary Brown concert

On April 28, the first major concert of Rosemary Brown's music for eight years is to be staged at the Wigmore Hall, London.

Rosemary Brown, the medium through whom new works by Beethoven, Liszt and other famous composers, have been channelled, has been the subject of a study by Professor Parrot.

The Wigmore Hall concert will have some new works, including a Beethoven sonata. That, and the other compositions, will be played by Timothy Carey.

Next issue, *Alpha* will carry an interview with Rosemary Brown.

Answering the critics

WHAT single experiment, or series of experiments, would you put forward to a hostile critic as being irrefutable proof of psychic powers, occurring under perfectly controlled conditions?

That question was put by author Francis Hitching to 160 people with experience of parapsychology (individuals whose names have appeared in parapsychological journals over the last five years).

"I gather it's the first time such a survey has been carried out on anything like a comprehensive scale," he said in February when he lectured at a meeting of the Society for Psychical Research, in London.

He had received 52% response to his letter, 47 copies of which were sent to British researchers

and the rest overseas. About half a dozen were negative, believing that there is no such thing as an ideal experiment to prove the existence of psychic power.

The response of a number of psychic researchers has been greatly influenced by the recent revelation that work carried out by Dr S. G. Soal (a former SPR president) is now regarded as being fraudulent. "The Soal case," said one British researcher, "has made me decide that I wouldn't put my faith in a set of experiments by one experimenter."

In his interim report on the survey Hitching listed the results, which showed that Puthoff and Targ's remote viewing experiments at Stanford Research Institute collected the largest number of votes.

The church's view of Spiritualism

Forty years' silence has at last been broken by the Church of England with the publication of the *Report of the Committee to the Archbishop of Canterbury (1939) on Spiritualism*. For the first time, the full story is told in the *Christian Parapsychologist* of March 1979. Up till now only part of the report had been made known – the favourable conclusions of the majority of the Committee had been leaked to *Psychic News* in 1947. What remained undisclosed were the vehemently dissenting views of a minority.

They drafted their own conclusions, critical and sceptical of the evidence reviewed. Far from encouraging closer ties with Spiritualism, the minority advised that the Church should "not seek to establish any relations with Spiritualism".

In addition, Mrs Stuart Moore, better known as the mystical theologian and writer, Evelyn Underhill, resigned from the Committee at the second meeting: "... I am struck once more with the utterly sub-Christian, anthropocentric, hopelessly unsupernatural character of the Spiritualist outlook. It is all about man, his survival, prospects, etc. hardly at all about God, and really represents *au fond* the nineteenth-century naturalistic attitude with a little superstition stirred in."

Despite this rather unpromising start, the report goes on to examine the evidence presented by nine witnesses, including scientists, laymen, a psychologist, and other people who had experience of Spiritualism.

All the Committee accepted that part of the Report concerning the presentation of the evidence

which revealed the wide range of responses and experiences that different people recorded. Some were favourable: a Churchman said that "until he studied Spiritualism he was beginning to lose interest in religion because he did not hear anything that he had not heard many times before. Spiritualism ... had given him a new interest in spiritual things." Others were dismissive. One witness maintained that after 25 years investigation "he had come to the conclusion that there is nothing to be said for the physical phenomena which include telekinesis, ectoplasm, materialisation, spirit photographs, trumps and the like. These are due either to fraud or to mal-observation."

When it came to weighing the evidence presented, the majority conceded the problems posed by fraud, self-delusion and the absence of hard scientific proof. But the seven signatories were sufficiently impressed to allow that certain "outstanding psychic experiences of individuals ... make a strong *prima facie* for survival and for the possibility of spirit communications".

Since the Committee had, in the opening sections of the Report, acknowledged the widespread attraction that Spiritualism held for many people, the majority was left with the task of relating its findings with Christian teachings. While admitting that Spiritualism could be a magnet to people for "lower motives" – the kind that had led Evelyn Underhill to turn her back on the Committee's work – they maintained that there was a lesson for the Church. "Spiritualism claims in fact to be making accessible a reality which the Church has proclaimed but of which it has seemed only to offer a shadow."

Finally, they concluded that "representatives of the Church should keep in touch with groups of intelligent persons who believe in Spiritualism".

In stark contrast, the minority of three placed a great deal of stress on the absence of acceptable, positive evidence: "the spiritualist hypothesis has not been proved; in fact there is no evidence which would convince a scientist or an open-minded layman that Spiritualists do communicate with discarnate spirits."

In his review of the complete document, Garth Moore, President of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies, says, in the *Christian Parapsychologist*, that "there is much in the Report which is good". But he points to the narrow terms of reference of the Committee, which sought "to

investigate the subject of communications with discarnate spirits and the claims of Spiritualism in relation to the Christian faith". He also comments on the way the evidence was presented through unnamed witnesses with no reference to the wider research carried out in the field of psychical phenomena. "It is odd, too, that a Report commissioned by the Church should contain so little theology," he adds.

But both majority and minority groups agreed that the study had, implicitly, highlighted a weakness in the Church's practices. In their recommendations, both used the same words: "Anglican prayers for the dead to not satisfy people's needs, because the prayers are so cautious in their language that it is not always evident that the dead are being prayed for, as contrasted with the living." Yet on the subject of Spiritualism, the two groups remained deeply divided. If the publication of the Report does nothing else, it gives the lie to the rumour put about earlier, that the majority portion leaked in the 40's represented the full story.

See us at Olympia

ALPHA has taken a stand at the Festival for Mind, Body and Spirit (April 21 to April 29). We shall be running two competitions with cash prizes for the winners. One will test your powers of extra-sensory perception. The other will show whether you can successfully predict a five-symbol sequence which will not be chosen until the last day of the festival: a walkover for psychics ... or good guessers.

Julie Knowles

In the first issue of ALPHA in *Uri Geller: the full story*, we included an item on p 19 concerning tests of Julie Knowles' powers. Her mother has pointed out that the experiments were run at Bath University and not, as the article stated, at her home. Mrs Knowles also drew our attention to earlier telepathy, psychokinesis and metal-bending tests reported in the *American National Enquirer*, 26 October 1976, that produced positive results.

Deleyed

The feature "Following the ley lines" which we announced would be in this issue of *Alpha* has had to be held over because of pressure on space. It will appear in Issue No. 3. For full details of next issue's contents see back cover.

Delving in the archives of the mind

Hypnotic regression produces spectacular results as Gabrielle Donnelly discovered. She found herself in the 17th Century as Alice Baines. Whether it was a creative trick of the mind or a genuine memory, she found the experience compellingly real.



THE VOICE of the hypnotist floated above my head. "Let your present self dissolve . . . let your mind go back . . . back to the time before you were born . . . the time when you may have been someone else." Relaxing in a pleasant sitting-room in North London, between the noise of the builders in the kitchen next door, and of the lorries roaring past outside, I was being sent back three centuries to a previous incarnation. I was undergoing regression.

Regression is the practice of sending subjects back, under hypnosis, to re-live events in their past. So much is medically accepted. But over the past twenty-odd years, a new aspect of it has appeared. It has been claimed – with increasing conviction, and by an increasing number of people – that it is possible to guide regression subjects even further back. Back through the mists of time and space so that they seem to experience, once again, lives they have lived before.

Leonard Wilder, a dentist by profes-

sion, is one of the foremost practitioners of the science in Great Britain. He stumbled upon it, almost by accident, nearly twenty years ago, when he was trying to cure a friend of a phobia by regressing her into her past. Under his hypnosis, she began to get "flashes" from what seemed to be another existence, flashes which grew into an extraordinarily detailed picture of the life of a Devonshire woman in the 17th century. Since then, Mr Wilder has been perfecting his technique, and he now claims that, given time and co-operation, he can produce a similar effect in anyone.

Where do these experiences come from? "I'm not going to say definitely that it's reincarnation," he said. "Although I think it may well be. But to find any explanation for it at all, we must infer what, in fact, most Eastern religions believe – that when we die, our physical life is terminated, but in some way our consciousness carries on.

"We must accept the possibility that

there is a soul, a spirit, an intangible intelligence, that could be born again in the body of a baby, and that could take several lifetimes to gain experience. You see, the mind is like an iceberg. Only about one eighth is the conscious mind – the rest is submerged. And I do believe the experience of regression comes from the psychic, not the physical, memory." It's an attractive theory. "People do want to know more about themselves, and whether they survive death."

Mr Wilder won't, himself, be drawn on whether he takes regression as proof positive of previous existences. He agrees that a lot of his subjects' experiences could come from cryptomnesia – the unconscious reproduction of what they have already read, or heard, and forgotten. But he says that cryptomnesia can't entirely explain it away.

"A subject under regression just can't be faulted," he said. "My very first patient, Peggy Bailey – she actually turned into Sally Fraser, this 18th-

century countrywoman. She spoke with a Devon burr, instead of a London accent. I asked her if she watched television, and she didn't know what I was talking about. And when she was an old woman, and ill, I asked her how she was being treated, and she said "th' apothecary comes, and gives me potions and suchlike." Even her vocabulary belonged to two hundred years ago. Another subject suddenly burst into fluent German – which normally he hardly spoke at all.

"Subjects even change their facial expressions – if they're being an aggressive person, they look aggressive, and so on. And they speak very convincingly. I played some tapes of a session once to a friend of mind, Diana Rigg. She was most impressed. She said if that person was acting then they were very good."

Convincing, maybe – but some of the experiences of regression seem to have been quite traumatic. For instance, many people under regression have remembered their death. Sally Fraser died peacefully of old age, with the ghost of her dead husband Sam "a-smilin' and a-noddin' and a beckonin' " to her gaze. But, for others, the death experience was less pleasant.

A First-World-War German flying ace was shot down in flames, screaming "Kaput!" A young woman out for a day's skating on the local pond was drowned under the ice. Another woman came to a nightmarish end, caught in the wheels of a threshing machine. Why do people risk undergoing such horrors, even at second-hand?

"Curiosity," said Mr Wilder. "We start off by only remembering the pleasant things – often a birthday, or a wedding day. Then I say, shall we carry on and see what happens? Generally by that time, they're so interested that they agree. It's not an unpleasant experience – people say it's like a film rushing past them. They're usually fascinated."

It's all, he says, a question of control. "Obviously, there is a skill involved. If the regressioner is not sufficiently skilful, he could wake the subject up at the wrong moment, which could be terribly disturbing. You could be upset for days. But I'm always careful to bring the subject right back to the present, tell them that they'll wake up knowing exactly who they are, and feeling marvellously refreshed. And they do."

Mr Wilder began the session, as he always does, with a question. "What do you imagine is going to happen?" I didn't really know. I thought he'd hypnotise me, my mind would drift away, and he'd send me back through the centuries to see what happened – for good or ill. Which was quite wrong. He explained that he would hypnotise me, yes, but that at no time would I "drift away", that I would always be in full control, and that he was not going to send me anywhere. Where I went I would go by myself – he was only my guide.

We were ready for the first session to

begin. I lay down on the couch, fully prepared to be either horrified or disillusioned with the results or to be disappointed with no results at all. As it turned out, those were two of the most exciting hours of my present life.

The first session was really just a trial run, to get me used to the idea of hypnosis. It was quite unspectacular. With vague memories of stage hypnotists, I had expected waving fingers, bright objects, sonorous incantations. Instead, Mr Wilder sat back in a chair, beside the couch, and talked. In a low, reassuring, rather monotonous voice, he talked about hypnosis, about relaxation, about sleep. As he talked, my mind remained perfectly clear, but my body gradually felt light and deliciously comfortable . . . I hadn't by any means drifted away. But I was under hypnosis.

We began to chat about my childhood. I told him of things I remembered, things I half-remembered, things I hadn't thought about for years. Suddenly, in a vivid flash, it was more than just remembering – it was re-living. I could see the bright colours of a lump of Plasticine, glaring green and yellow, and quite huge in relation to my tiny hands – I could almost feel the stuff. Just for an instant I was three years old. This, then, was regression.

Feeling of panic

The second session started in the same way. He went quickly back through my childhood, back to the time when I was a baby. So much was relatively easy. Then the real effort began. "Go back," said Mr Wilder, "to the time before you were born. The time when you may have been someone else. And at all times you will speak only the truth."

I lay on the couch with my eyes closed, and for a painfully long time all was black. "What can you see?" Nothing. I began to panic. Supposing nothing happened at all? Supposing I couldn't do it? In my mind, I strained harder and harder. "Don't force yourself," said Mr Wilder. "Just concentrate. Something will come." I didn't believe him.

At long last, something began to break through the darkness. The sun rising? Yes, the sun behind a tree on a distant hill. Was it regression, or was it simply an image that had floated into my mind from who knows where? I didn't know . . . but my mind fixed on the idea, worried it, developed it. An avenue of trees . . . I was walking along it . . . as I looked down, I caught a glimpse of a long blue skirt and dark cloth shoes. Something – I still didn't quite know what – was in my mind.

Mr Wilder began to fire questions at me. He's a highly skilled questioner, knows exactly which questions to ask and what reaction to give to make you feel you're pouring forth startling revelations. I could feel myself being led on. And yet the answers to most of the questions were there, they sprang into my

mind instantly. A product of his questioning? Auto-suggestion? Or something more?

My name was Alice Baines, and the year was 1672. I was walking down the avenue early in the morning, and on my right was the hill with the sun rising behind the lone tree. That was definite. But I didn't know how old I was, or the colour of my hair. I didn't know where I was going, or what I was supposed to be doing. Back in the twentieth century, the workmen in the next room were beginning to irritate me, as was Mr Wilder's habit of leaning forward and practically shouting into my face, and then leaning right back and whispering. (I later learned that that is a very common illusion, and that in fact he hadn't moved or altered his tone of voice at all). I felt that my concentration was going, that whatever I had had, I was losing it . . .

Suddenly, it all came alive. I wasn't striving any more, I wasn't grasping at will-o'-the-wisp sensations. I actually was there. I turned right, climbed the little bank by the avenue, and headed through the trees, across vivid green grass, and towards the distant tree on the hill. And I felt so happy, I thought my heart would burst.

A young man came to meet me and took my arm. "That's why you're happy," said Mr Wilder. He was beautifully dressed in a plum-coloured coat, black breeches, and silk stockings. His name was Tom, he was 24, and he was much richer than I was. "Does it matter that he's rich?" asked Mr Wilder. I didn't think so. "What's his surname?" I said I didn't know. There was a name in my head, but for some reason I didn't say it – it was the only thing I kept back. Now, although I remember the rest of the experience perfectly, I've forgotten that name. Maybe his wealth was a problem after all.

I left us, Tom and myself, standing arm in arm looking towards the tree and the rising sun. We hadn't even spoken. But something had happened between us, something which has lasted, somewhere in my mind, for three hundred years.

I don't feel particularly involved with Alice Baines. I don't much like the sound of her – she seems rather cunning and materialistic – and I'm certainly not going to go digging up old records trying to find out more about her. I feel that my own ancestors have much more relevance to the person I am now. Apparently, this lack of interest is quite common: Peggy Bailey, Mr Wilder's first subject, waited 16 years before she even bothered to listen to the tapes of her sessions.

But I do believe that Alice existed. And I do believe that in some curious way, in some previous incarnation with which I feel no sense of identity, I was her. I do now feel quite strongly that I have been here before. And that's an idea I shall take with me throughout this life . . . and maybe beyond. α

Korchnoi's complaint: the Soviets' secret weapon

Can the Russians influence human behaviour by psychic forces? Chess challenger Viktor Korchnoi believed so. Now comes support from two once-secret CIA reports on Soviet psychic research.



IT WASN'T skill which enabled Anatoly Karpov to beat Viktor Korchnoi in last year's world chess championship. It was psychic forces which the Soviets were beaming at the challenger to put him off.

That was Korchnoi's complaint and it was treated with derision by most people who regarded it as a weak excuse. But now two CIA reports have reached Britain, concerning Iron Curtain research into psychic phenomena, which contain amazing predictions about the possible military applications of such powers. And they make Korchnoi's allegations seem positively trivial in comparison.

One of the reports, *Controlled Offensive Behaviour - USSR*, prepared by the US Army Office of the Surgeon General for the Defense Intelligence Agency, makes these observations:

"In summary, what is the strategic threat posed by the current 'explosion' in Soviet parapsychological research? Soviet efforts in the field of psi research, sooner or later, might enable them to do some of the following:

"(a) Know the contents of top secret US documents, the movements of our troops and ships and the location and nature of our military installations.

"(b) Mould the thoughts of key US military and civilian leaders, at a distance.

"(c) Cause the instant death of any US official, at a distance.

"(d) Disable, at a distance, US military equipment of all types including space craft."

That report was circulated within the CIA in mid-1972 and contained a note that its contents should be declassified on 31 December 1990. However, through the Freedom of Information Act, the military have had to release the report (though there are blank spaces where material which is still classified has been deleted). It came into the hands of American parapsychologists and a copy of the report has now reached England and is in the library of the Society for Psychical Research.

A second, and more recent report from the same source, *Soviet and Czechoslovakian Parapsychology Research*, has also been obtained and that, too, is now on

file at the SPR. It was published for military use only, in September 1975, by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Before looking at the contents of these now declassified reports, let us remind ourselves of the chess championship fiasco in Baguio City, Philippines, last year. Things came to a head in August after Korchnoi made a number of surprising blunders and appeared to lack the concentration one would expect from a Grand Master.

The Russian defector, living in exile in Sweden, blamed the presence of a Soviet doctor in the audience. This man, he claimed, was using parapsychological powers to affect his play. But the Russian delegation insisted that the man in question was Dr Vladimir Zoukhar, a distinguished professor of neurology and psychology, who was only there to give Karpov psychological support.

When Korchnoi saw Dr Zoukhar sitting in the fourth row at the start of the 17th game he protested violently. "I'll give you ten minutes to shift that man," he shouted to the organisers. They responded with a typical compromise:

they moved the entire audience back.

By the end of August the Korchnoi camp had made 17 protests about Dr Zoukhar and his activities and Madame Petra Leewerik, the head of Korchnoi's team, had taken to sitting next to him. Her behaviour at first amounted to no more than icy stares and flashing a copy of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* under his nose. Eventually, and perhaps in desperation, she plunged a ball-point pen in his arm and stamped on his foot.

In the end, Korchnoi took two weeks off during which time he met two American members of the Indian-based Anand Marg sect who taught him meditation and yoga techniques designed to prevent mental influence from the Soviets. It seemed to work, for his play improved and the match became a close fought affair, but Karpov, the reigning champion, eventually held on to his title.

What never became clear from newspaper accounts of this long-drawn out and bizarre affair is why Korchnoi should have suspected his adversaries of psychic foul play in the first place. Perhaps he or Madame Leewerik had



Viktor Korchnoi makes a move in his losing battle against fellow Russian Anatoly Karpov during last year's world chess championship.



read the best-selling book *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain* by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder (1970), and realised how vulnerable they could be to psychic forces.

Before the appearance of that book, the West's knowledge of Soviet psychic research was confined largely to the published works of Professor Leonid L. Vasiliev, chairman of physiology at the University of Leningrad and holder of the Lenin Prize. In the early 1920s V. M. Bekhterev had collaborated with V. L. Durov at Leningrad University on a study of the effect of mental telepathy in a group of performing dogs. Bekhterev believed that electromagnetic radiation might explain the phenomenon they were observing. Prof Vasiliev took up the work, at the Bekhterev Brain Institute, but by 1937 he had eliminated the electromagnetic theory.

Using normal and psychiatric patients as subjects Vasiliev conducted a series of controlled experiments in which he, or other researchers, gave *mental* commands and watched the subjects' reactions. Those taking part in the tests were usually under hypnosis and the results were very remarkable.

One subject, a 29-year-old woman in a Leningrad hospital, was suffering from hysterical paralysis of the left side which prevented her from moving her arm or leg on that side of her body. Under hypnosis, however, she could be persuaded to move them if given strong spoken commands. Vasiliev decided to try telepathy with her. She was hypnotised and blindfolded to prevent her from reacting to visual clues.

Vasiliev and a colleague sent her mental commands which included moving the paralysed limbs. She responded, with varying degrees of success. Interestingly, when asked why she was performing a certain movement, she replied, "Prof Vasiliev made me do it." Or she would name one of the other researchers. She nearly always knew which experimenter had given her the mental command.

This particular patient was the subject of 19 telepathic tests during 15 sessions. Vasiliev recorded that ten were completely successful, six were partial successes and only three were failures.

Having satisfied themselves that telepathy was a fact the Russians set about trying to discover just what it was that was able to carry information from one mind to another. To test the electromagnetic theory Vasiliev used a Faraday cage to shield his subjects from all forms of electromagnetism. To his surprise telepathy continued to function as before.

Vasiliev's work was carried out under the Stalin regime and was not publicised, in Russia or the West, until the late 1950s. It was in 1959 that his *Mysterious*

Phenomena of the Human Psyche first appeared, followed three years later by *Experiments in Mental Suggestion*. Despite the fact that the second book contained this statement, "The discovery of the energy underlying ESP will be equivalent to the discovery of atomic energy," the implications of the Soviet work were largely ignored in the West for at least a decade.

Even if no other psychic investigations had been carried out in Russia, Vasiliev's findings would have been sufficient to confirm Viktor Korchnoi's belief that his mental concentration could be affected by thoughts of others. In fact, the Soviets have come a long way since Vasiliev's work, and appear to have a number of very gifted psychics whose powers have helped scientists gain a greater understanding of the mechanisms of psi.

It was the realisation that Soviet discoveries in the field of parapsychology could be used to manipulate people which inspired the original CIA report dealing with controlled offensive behaviour. The secret document set out to provide as much material and speculation as possible on the subject, and its sources – listed in its bibliography – range from popular books to newspaper accounts, as well as classified intelligence reports. Here are some extracts from that first report:

Future trends

It is now apparent that the ideological stigmas attached to parapsychological phenomena have been breached in the Soviet Union. Although serious studies of psi have been going on in the USSR since the 1920s, it has only been since 1962 that researchers such as L. Vasiliev have been allowed to publish their work.

In 1971, however, the open literature and the open exchange of ideas between the USSR and the West halted. During the next 15 years it is expected that the Soviets will energetically pursue all aspects of parapsychology. With party approval and with the large sums of money allocated in the late 1960s, it is inconceivable that the work has stopped.

It is believed that certain military applications have been discovered and that by 1980 the Soviets will have mastered some aspects of psi phenomena in order to alter human behaviour.

KGB backing

Many scientists, US and Soviet, feel that parapsychology can be harnessed to create conditions where one can alter or manipulate the minds of others. The major impetus behind the Soviet drive to harness the possible capabilities of telepathic communication, telekinetics, and bionics are said to come from the Soviet military and the KGB.

Today, it is reported that the USSR has

20 or more centres for the study of parapsychological phenomena, with an annual budget estimated at 21 million dollars.

Telepathic influence

The ability to focus a mental "whammy" on an enemy through hypnotic telepathy has surely occurred to the Soviets. In espionage, one could telepathically hypnotise an individual with the post-hypnotic suggestion to steal classified documents or detonate important military equipment. The mission is accomplished and the individual does not even know that he has done anything.

(Dr Milan) Ryzl stated in *Psychic*, "The bulk of recent telepathy research in the USSR is concerned with the transmission of behaviour/impulses – or research to subliminally control an individual's conduct." Visiting Soviet psi labs in 1967, Dr Ryzl says he was told by a Soviet, "When suitable means of propaganda are cleverly used, it is possible to mould any man's conscience so that in the end he may misuse his abilities while remaining convinced that he is serving an honest purpose." Ryzl continues, "The USSR has the means to keep the results of such research secret from the rest of the world and, as practical applications for these results become possible, there is no doubt that the Soviet Union will do so."

The 177-page report was followed three years later by a second study which dealt more specifically with parapsychological developments in the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Nothing in the intervening years had caused the Defense Intelligence Agency to change its mind about the significance of parapsychology, and it made these pertinent observations:

Behaviour modification

Dr Stefan Manczarski of Poland . . . believes that telepathy can be amplified by radio waves. Telepathy would then become a subtle new modus for the "influencers" of the world. Some Western followers of psychic phenomena research are concerned, for example, with the detrimental effects of subliminal perception techniques being targeted against US or allied personnel in nuclear missile silos. The subliminal message could be "carried" by television signals or by telepathic means.

The potential applications of focusing mental influences on an enemy through hypnotic telepathy have surely occurred to the Soviets. The bulk of recent telepathy research in the USSR has been concerned with the transmission of emotional or behavioural impulses and the study of physiological responses to PK exercises, etc. In their exploration of telepathy, they are seeking the eventual capability to reproduce and to amplify the phenomena so that control is feasible.



ible. Control and manipulation of the human consciousness must be considered a primary goal.

Psychotronic generators (also called Pavlita generators after the inventor) are small devices said to be capable of drawing biological energy from humans; the energy is accumulated and stored for future use. Once charged with human energy, the generators can do some of the things a psychic subject can do, but, according to the inventor, Robert Pavlita, can be charged by individuals possessing no psychic ability. . . .

No information is available on Czech efforts to develop psychotronic weapons, but Pavlita has stated that some forms of his devices can exert both favourable and unfavourable effects on living organisms, including man. In experiments with snails exposed to energy from a generator, a state similar to hibernation resulted.

When flies were placed in the gap of a circular generator they died instantly. In another test, Pavlita aimed a generator at his daughter's head from a distance of several yards. Her electroencephalogram (EEG) changed, she became dizzy, and her equilibrium was disrupted. . . .

If the Czech claims for these devices are valid, biological energy might be an effective antipersonnel weapon. It would be difficult to defend against, since it apparently penetrates most common forms of insulation and its reported effects . . . could result in personality changes or physical discomfort which might alter combat effectiveness.

Soviet or Czech perfection of psychotronic weapons would pose a severe threat to enemy military, embassy or security functions. The emitted energy would be silent and difficult to detect electronically (although the Soviets claim to have developed effective biological energy sensors) and the only power source required would be the human operator.

Gifted psychics

Since paranormal research was granted political respectability in the Soviet Union in the 1950s, Soviet scientists have concentrated their investigations on a relatively few, highly "gifted", psychic individuals, and have attempted to determine what (if any) physiological attributes underlie their capabilities and differ from those of non-psychic subjects. Parallel with these efforts to determine cause(s), the Soviets have concentrated considerable effort on determination of the nature of the energy fields formed and to attempts to determine whether all psychokinetically gifted subjects create the same, or different, energy fields. . . .

All of the Soviet and Czech research on PK is significant, especially that associated with the spectacular Soviet

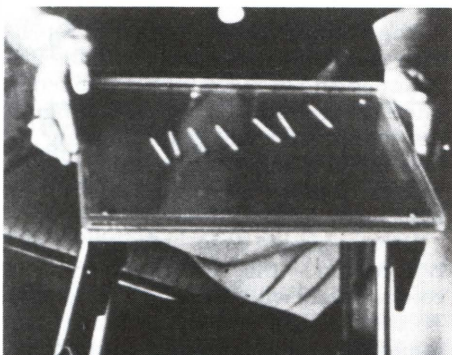
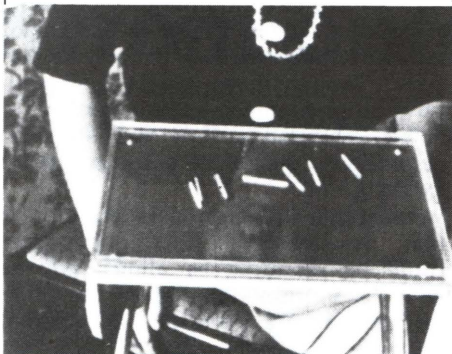
psychics Kulagina, Vinogradova and Ermolayev. Kulagina's highly publicised ability to affect living tissues might be applied against human targets; in like manner, Vinogradova's power to move objects, and Ermolayev's levitational ability could possibly be used to activate or deactivate power supplies or to steal military documents or hardware.

* * *

This speculation is heady stuff, considering its source. The authors of these once-secret reports admit that it is not possible to evaluate some of the psychic claims, and a number of Western researchers will doubtless be amused that the CIA has taken it all so seriously. After all, psychic ability is – at best – an elusive

These three stills were taken from a film which shows Russian psychic Nina Kulagina apparently moving objects by psychokinesis. (Photos copyright of Paraphysical Laboratory, Downton, Wilts.)

The remarkable powers of Nina Kulagina



quality, and to suggest that it can be harnessed to steal secrets or kill enemies at a distance seems to be bordering on the realms of science fiction.

Yet the Russians *are* taking psychic research seriously and if they have stumbled on the secret of telepathic transmission it would be a tremendous breakthrough. Similarly, understanding the mechanism of psychokinesis could also enable them to manipulate people or objects in a way that, at present, we would regard as impossible.

The Korchnoi-Karpov encounter really tells us nothing about Soviet psychic achievements. It is possible that they *were* using psychic influences to affect Korchnoi's play. But it is just as likely that it was no more than psychological warfare: planting the fear of psychic influence and leaving Korchnoi's own mind to stumble as a result.

An encounter which perhaps throws more light on Soviet involvement in this subject is the Robert Toth affair. Toth, the 48-year-old Moscow correspondent of the *Los Angeles Times*, was arrested on a Moscow street on 11 June 1977. The KGB pounced on him just as he was handed a document by Valery Georgievich Petukhov which the Russians declared contained secret information "of a political and military" character. It transpired that the document was a scientific paper which purported to provide proof of ESP's reality.

Toth, who was just coming to the end of his period as Moscow correspondent, was eventually released and allowed to leave Russia, and it is believed that his arrest was partly to teach him a lesson for taking an interest in the Soviet dissident movement.

A further puzzle is that the man who gave him the paper, Petukhov, is unknown to Western parapsychologists who have established close contact with their Soviet counterparts. So the Toth paper would appear to be a deliberate "plant" to frame the reporter, partly to intimidate other journalists in Moscow. But why use a treatise on parapsychology?

The possibility has to be faced that the Soviets *want* us to believe they know more about the paranormal than they do. But if that is the case, it is difficult to understand their motives. After all, such claims are likely to make the West put more effort into studying psychic phenomena, which could mean that in time we will achieve all the things which military intelligence suggests the Soviets may be doing.

And that raises a final, and so far unanswered question. If the CIA has spent money on compiling two secret reports on psychic activities behind the Iron Curtain, what other money has it spent on trying to duplicate the results?

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Philip: the man-made phantom

For four years a group of Canadians received communications from a ghost of their own making. But no one knows how the man-made phantom was able to produce the astonishing phenomena they witnessed.

WHAT IS a ghost? The traditional view is that it is an earthbound spirit which is tied to a particular place because of a tragic death or mental anguish.

Even if that is true of some ghosts, it is clearly not a satisfactory explanation for all "hauntings". As long ago as 1886 a book appeared which is a classic of its kind, *Phantasms of the Living*. Its authors, Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers and Frank Podmore, quoted 700 cases in their two-volume work which dealt with well-authenticated accounts of telepathy and apparitions of living people.

It has been realised for more than a century that ghosts of the dead and of the living appear to have the same characteristics, but apart from recording dramatic incidents of both types of apparition, no one attempted any experimental work to try to reach a better understanding of their true nature.

Not, that is, until September 1972 when a group of Canadian investigators (members of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research) decided to try to produce a phantom. They had been involved in a number of ghost-hunts and had come to the conclusion that ghosts were, in some way, hallucinations. This theory would explain why recognised ghosts usually wore clothes which were familiar.

If their theory was correct then they felt they ought to be able to produce their own ghost – a collective hallucination. The group, consisting of an accountant, an engineer, an industrial designer, a scientific research assistant and four housewives, gave their phantom a name – Philip – and invented a history for him. He was an aristocratic Englishman living in the middle 1600s whose beautiful wife was frigid. He took a gypsy girl as a mistress, keeping her secretly in the gatehouse of his family home, Diddington Manor, Warwickshire.

When his wife discovered the mistress she accused her of witchcraft and the poor girl was burned at the stake. Filled with remorse for not saving her life, Philip paced the battlements and eventually threw himself to his death.

It was a colourful story but one which also included a number of historical inaccuracies. Every Thursday night, the group of eight met and talked about Philip until he became as familiar to them as a real person. And they used meditation techniques in the hope of causing him to appear as an apparition in the centre of their circle.

Unlike other groups which try to produce psychic phenomena, the Toronto group decided at the outset that they

would sit in light conditions rather than in the dark.

But after a year there was no sign of Philip putting in an appearance and the group was feeling discouraged. It was at this point that one of the group's members, Iris M. Owen (wife of Dr George Owen, director of the New Horizons Research Foundation and a parapsychologist with an international reputation) came across the work of three British psychic researchers.

Philip would rap his replies directly under the questioner's hand

The *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* carried a report from C. Brookes-Smith and D. W. Hunt (1970) on "Some Experiments in Psychokinesis." And an earlier contribution in the same publication (1966) by K. J. Batchelor gave a "Report on a Case of Table Levitation." Though these papers dealt with physical phenomena – the movement of objects without touch – and not with apparitions, they were a turning point for the group.

The three British researchers argued that psychokinetic (PK) phenomena could be produced by almost anyone with the right mental disposition. Their methods were akin to the light-hearted Victorian seances in which the sitters spoke freely and sang.

The Toronto group decided to replace their meditation techniques with the British ones and it rapidly paid dividends. They never produced a phantom figure, but within four weeks of adopting the new method they began getting rapping sounds from the top of the table and the table started sliding around the floor.

Using a simple code – one rap for yes, two for no – they set about trying to communicate with the source of the raps. To their delight and astonishment they found they were in contact with Philip – their man-made phantom.

They questioned him about his life and times – the history which they had given him – and he answered correctly. But quite apart from the content of his messages, it was the phenomena which particularly excited the group and the many witnesses who attended their weekly sessions.

The raps and table levitations were produced in bright light, with observers present who were able to confirm that the participants were only resting their

fingers lightly on the table top and there was no way of creating the effect normally. To reinforce the paranormal nature of the phenomena, Philip would even rap his replies directly under the hand of the questioner. He also switched lights off on command and caused cool breezes.

In time the group of eight discovered Philip could perform anywhere. He accompanied them to a Toronto TV station where he went through his paces before a studio audience, undaunted by the bright lights.

In March 1975 the group were invited to Kent State University, USA, for a weekend of experiments with Professor Wilbur Franklin of the Physics Department. For two days Philip produced raps and movements of the table, all of which were recorded and videotaped. One sequence showed Dr Franklin unsuccessfully trying to keep a levitating table on the floor by sitting on it.

Other groups have since learned the same technique for producing these PK effects and have also succeeded in communicating with their own man-made ghosts.

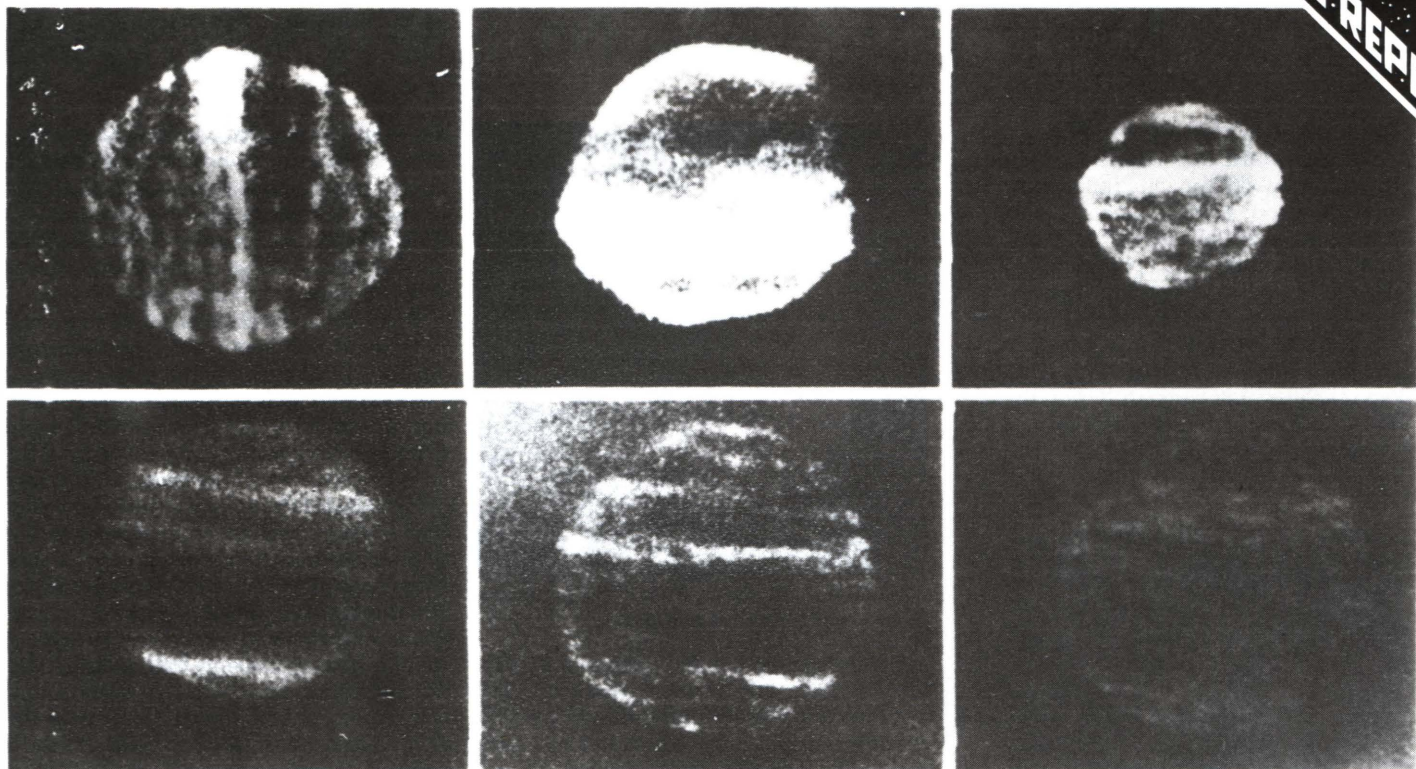
Interestingly, when another research group joined the Toronto team for a joint session, each party was able to identify which phantom was communicating by the difference in the way the raps were produced.

In March 1977 a group of French-speaking researchers from Montreal, who had been conducting experiments along the same lines with a fictional phantom named Axel, visited the Philip team. During a joint session Philip and Axel responded to questions from their respective group members, each in his own language.

One of the Montreal group knew several languages and Axel gave the correct response to questions put in Russian, Greek and Roumanian, as well as French.

But by April 1977 Iris Owen was reporting: "Enjoyable as the experiment is for a while, it is frustrating not to be able to take it further. It does seem that it is not difficult to produce the raps; we clearly understand and have proved that there is no 'spirit' behind the communications; the messages are from the group subconscious, but it is the physical force that we need to know more about."

So, a few months later, having found no way to advance their knowledge further, the group who brought Philip to life reluctantly put him to death and abandoned their sessions . . . having uncovered more mysteries than they had solved. α



By Jupiter – was it Venus or a visitor from outer space?

These photographs, taken from a film made by an airborne TV crew flying over New Zealand on 31 December 1978, caused worldwide excitement. But have they added to our understanding of UFOs?

IF THE quality of a UFO sighting could be judged from the amount of publicity it receives, then the New Zealand incident in which a bright object was filmed by a TV crew would rank as the best yet. But sadly for the UFO believers it is unlikely to live up to its early promise.

The now famous film was shown on several BBC TV newscasts in the New Year and it was extensively covered by the national Press. Footage of the dancing blurred light was also screened around the world and there seemed every reason to believe that the fortunate television team had come face to face with an extraordinary phenomenon which could not be explained in conventional terms.

It even seemed possible that the film would provide science with irrefutable evidence that UFOs were real. But very soon it became clear that the TV team, quite innocently, had created a bigger stir than the sighting warranted. The reason is that, apart from the film which they produced, they did not do a very good job of providing other, and equally salient, information about the December 31 sighting, without which the film was practically useless.

That also left the door open for the

sceptics to pin their favourite UFO explanations to this particular sighting. The film showed, said one newspaper, the planet Venus which was out of focus and appearing to move because it was taken with a hand-held camera. Another press report offered another planet – Jupiter – by way of explanation. It found an amateur astronomer who had put the film through a line-scan analyser and seen four other points of light which corresponded with the position of Jupiter's largest moons.

So which planet was it? Venus and Jupiter were not in the same part of the sky. Had the TV team been more precise about the position of the light they were filming it would have been possible to eliminate bright planets as the source. Instead, there was such a dearth of such information that almost anything seemed a likely possibility. Another suggestion was that the UFO was a meteorite. That, of course, could conveniently move across any part of the sky so it is less easy to eliminate, though the time duration of the sighting would seem to rule it out.

The *Daily Telegraph*, surprisingly, even devoted part of its leader column to the subject, issuing a mild rebuke to astronomers Sir Bernard Lovell and Sir

Martin Ryle for their "immediate and automatic" dismissals of the sightings. "The reaction of these learned gentlemen seems to be altogether out of keeping with the spirit of scientific inquiry."

The newspaper went on to make this observation: "There are a number of pictures, purporting to be of UFOs, which are so unclear that they might depict practically anything from a road sign to a poached egg. But they were taken by people whom we would not normally distrust – and the objects they photographed were clearly visible on an independently maintained radar. The scientist who suggested that all they were seeing was Venus on a particularly bright night can therefore be safely consigned to Bedlam."

But even that apparently fair statement is based on what might well turn out to be a false assumption. It is true that the aircraft carrying the witnesses did pick up UFOs on its radar and ground radar also detected UFOs, but the Press and TV reports are very vague about whether they were all seeing the same thing. Early reports suggested that ground radar detected 11 UFOs on its screen whereas the crew of the aircraft carrying the TV crew said they saw about eight unidentified objects. Yet it was only a

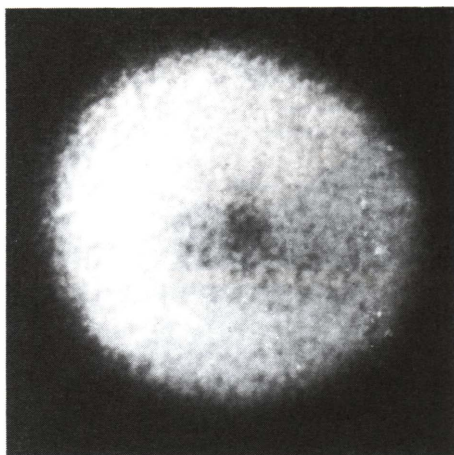
single object which was filmed.

At this point it is worth considering the comments of the lone radar controller at Wellington, Ken Bigham: "I managed to plot three of the echoes for 20 minutes or so before they faded completely. They definitely moved, varying between 50 and 100 knots. I certainly couldn't identify them as anything. It's pretty inconclusive. They were purely the sort of radar echoes that constantly pop up. It is not unusual to get strange echoes appearing on what we call primary radar. They usually amount to nothing at all."

So, despite the fact that the Royal New Zealand Air Force put a Skyhawk jet fighter on full-scale alert to intercept other UFOs, it came as no surprise towards the end of January to learn that the New Zealand defence ministry had dismissed the UFOs as "atmospheric phenomena" and the radar images as "spurious returns".

Temperature inversion – in which layers of hot and cold air cause light and radar beams to be reflected – has been blamed in the past for causing simultaneous visual and radar sightings. But never before has a film been produced of such a phenomenon (assuming the ministry's explanation is correct), so analysis of the film ought to provide confirmation or rebuttal of the official view.

The TV film was submitted to compu-



This "UFO", filmed by a TV crew on January 3, has been identified as Venus.

ter enhancement techniques along with another film, taken on January 3 from the ground (and also widely shown on TV) by another film crew. The latter was said to be "almost certainly the planet Venus" by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Wellington. According to its statement, issued on February 28, the film was out of focus which made the planet look ten times larger than its actual appearance. But it made no comment on the earlier UFO film.

So what can we conclude about the New Zealand UFO case? The evidence points to a complex but not unknown

series of events which led to the incident: namely that atmospheric conditions gave rise to bogus radar returns which clearly induced excitement on the aircraft searching for UFOs and which led to the TV team mistaking a bright planet and stars for strange phenomena.

But only a detailed investigation will determine whether this explanation is accurate. Australian and New Zealand UFO groups will be trying to do just that, and it is to be hoped they will succeed in getting full reports from the pilot of the cargo aircraft which carried the TV crew – Captain Bill Startup – and his co-pilot Bob Guard, because according to newspaper reports their testimony would seem to be at odds with the explanations so far offered.

Captain Startup is quoted as saying that he had seen a large ball of light. "No aircraft would have the acceleration that thing did. It came within 18 miles of the aircraft and we decided to go in closer. It went above us, then below, and then shot away."

Coming from an experienced pilot who is used to flying at night that statement has to be kept in mind before the New Zealand UFO is labelled as yet another case for the "solved" file. But experienced UFO investigators are well aware that this fascinating case is unlikely to appear in the history books as the "classic" case it at first appeared to be. α

Another problem for the United Nations

UFOs are reported over every country in the world but so far it has been left to civilian research groups to attempt an international study of the phenomenon. Now the UN may step in.

IT IS now 32 years since UFOs made world-wide news following the Kenneth Arnold sighting over Mt Ranier in Washington State, USA. It wasn't a spectacular sighting by some standards, but it gave us the words "flying saucer".

The Press still uses the term but hundreds of thousands of enthusiasts around the globe have ensured that the strange aerial phenomena are called, more correctly, UFOs. It gives them an air of respectability – but it doesn't hide the fact that they are still as puzzling and enigmatic as they were in the 1940s. If anything, the puzzle has increased as the phenomena have become more varied and bizarre.

Within five years of Arnold's sighting

a tremendous UFO flap occurred, mainly in the USA, which provided a number of very notable sightings which remain unexplained to this day: see our case histories. Other flaps have occurred since, indicating that – for whatever reason – UFOs seem to concentrate their appearances in particular areas and times.

Close encounters with UFOs have also changed in character. From the contacts in the 1950s, when people like George Adamski were claiming to meet handsome long-haired Venusians, we have come to more frightening encounters with strange beings of various shapes and sizes who are able to kidnap humans and carry out experiments on them – if the stories are to be believed.

What can we make of all this? Hilary Evans' article in this issue does an excellent job of providing an objective assessment of the "state of play" and the many paranormal factors that have to be taken into account in any study of the phenomena. Meanwhile, as incidents like the New Zealand sighting keep the subject in the headlines, there is growing international pressure for a concerted scientific study of the subject. Sir Eric Gairy, former premier of Grenada, introduced the subject at the United Nations in 1977, calling for an international body to examine UFOs, under the agency of the UN. On December 8, 1978, the UN voted unanimously not to reject a resolution calling for such a body and the

discussion is to be resumed in June this year.

Pressure has also been brought to bear on American authorities under the "Freedom of Information Act". As a result, the FBI has released documents which confirm its involvement in UFOs between 1947 and 1964. Nor has the CIA escaped scrutiny. An American UFO group, Ground Saucer Watch, took the intelligence agency to court in the summer of 1978, and succeeded in getting it to release 900 pages of reports – which it did in January this year.

These once secret files include reports of sabotage alerts at bomb stores and nuclear missile bases in Montana, Michigan and Maine in 1975. The USAF made extensive attempts to track and detain the UFOs which buzzed the bases but they evaded pursuit.

Another case which has been brought to light under the Act concerns an incident in Iran, on September 19, 1976, which was reported to the US military authorities. In the early hours of that morning two Air Force F4 jet fighters were separately sent to intercept a brightly glowing UFO which had an unusual pattern of flashing lights. When each jet came within 25 nautical miles of the UFO they experienced temporary communications failure. The most extraordinary aspect of the report is that the UFO is supposed to have fired a missile at the second jet interceptor, but the missile eventually returned safely to the UFO. According to one newspaper report the object was tracked by radar, and seen by the crew of a commercial airliner. It claimed the UFO knocked out the weapons systems of the two jets as they prepared to fire missiles.

In the last few months alone there has been a spate of UFO reports of all kinds and from many countries. While the world was buzzing with the New Zealand TV UFO, police in Italy were taking pictures of luminous objects circling Milan Cathedral. They looked like stars and emitted a white light. And in Northern Italy dozens of villages on the slopes of Gran Sasso mountain were plunged into darkness after a UFO was reported hovering over a hydro-electric plant.

A *Sunday People* account gave more details of the Italian UFO flap (January 7). It said there had been 147 "reliable" Italian sightings since last August and hundreds of other encounters. Great balls of fire had been reported off the Adriatic coast by fishermen and seven men near Naples had seen an 8ft creature walking up and down a field for five hours. Two of the witnesses had repeated their story six times under three different hypnotists. Three Al Italia pilots had reported a 100-yard long UFO travelling at 1500 mph towards Russia. The newspaper account continued:

"A Naples professor of meteorology

watched one (a UFO) for 10 minutes as it performed aerobatics no plane could manage. A giant kite-shaped object was seen by hundreds of Italians. Fifteen people – including a priest – saw a giant cone of what looked like whipped cream land in a field then disappear. Three soldiers in Sicily saw strange men getting out of a flying saucer on Mount Etna and on Christmas Eve a power station technician was temporarily paralysed as a glowing red UFO partially blinded him."

In England, on New Year's Eve, schoolboy Andy McDonald, 13, of Run-corn, Cheshire, claimed to have been "buzzed" by a UFO while cycling. It was a large white light with a bright tail which, he said, tried to lift him off the ground.

In South Africa, on January 4, a former nurse claimed that a UFO landed near her home. A group of dark-skinned little men got out. Mrs Meagan Quezet had her close encounter just before midnight when, she said, she went for a walk with her 12-year-old son, Andre, because he could not sleep. She said one of the men, who seemed to be the leader, had a beard.

"I said hello to one of them, but I couldn't understand what he was saying.

"I told Andre to run off and bring his father and as he did so the creatures jumped about five feet into the air and vanished through a door into their craft. The door slid closed and the long steel-type legs began to stretch out. Then with a humming noise, it disappeared into the sky."

On the same day, an English housewife was also apparently visited by aliens. Mrs Jean Hingley of Rowley Regis, Staffs, has told police that soon after her husband left for work that morning, three little green men flew in through her window.

They had squeaky voices, pointed heads, arms and legs, and wore silver jackets. Their faces were waxen and horrible – like a corpse – and their eyes were dark black. The strange visitors were 2½ feet tall and very slim.

"At first I was terrified," Mrs Hingley, 45, told the *Sun* newspaper. "But I thought if I offered them food they would go away.

"They folded their wings to get into my lounge and I asked if they would like some mince pies and whisky. They took the mince pies, but turned down the whisky and asked for water."

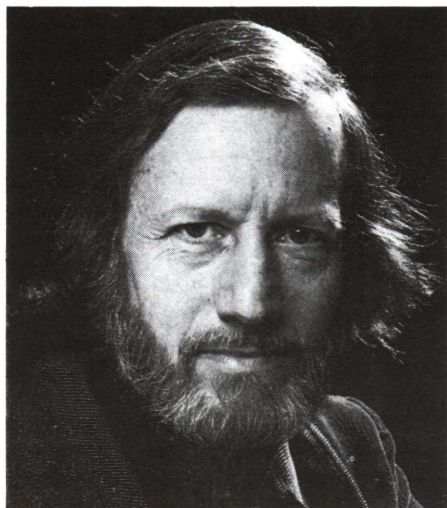
She said the creatures fled in terror when she lit a cigarette. They disappeared in a bright orange spacecraft. Her husband, Cyril, said he laughed at first, "but now I am beginning to believe it is true. My wife is not a nut-case."

There will certainly be no shortage of evidence to study if the UN does set up a UFO agency! α



UFOs come in many shapes and sizes, but shiny discs are common in daylight sightings. These photographs, all taken from colour transparencies, depict the classic "flying saucer" shape and are all said to be of genuine UFOs. But such photographic evidence is seldom as conclusive as most people would imagine.

UFOs: a slip in time



by Hilary Evans

IN 1977 the Society for Psychical Research received a near-unique library of UFO literature from Dr Norman Cockburn. It includes a complete run of the magazine Flying Saucer Review through to 1975 as well as extensive runs of other journals, such as the reputable French magazine Lumières de la Nuit. Dr Cockburn, along with many members of the SPR, had for many years believed that the UFO phenomenon was a matter for serious concern, and his gift prompted the SPR to consider whether UFOs should be included in the range of phenomena which its members investigate. This feature is based on a study document which Hilary Evans prepared for the SPR Council. Without attempting to draw conclusions, it sets out to present the facts in a totally objective way, and to demonstrate that there are some very intriguing parallels between UFO and paranormal phenomena.

UNIDENTIFIED Flying Objects present science with a problem unique in its size, intangibility, complexity and elusiveness.

A Gallup poll in 1966 suggested that five million Americans have seen flying objects which they were unable to identify. At least half a million reported their sightings which confirms the calculation that reported sightings may number only about 10 per cent of those experienced.

On the basis of past experience, experts such as Dr J. Allen Hynek, professor of astronomy at Northwestern University, USA, consider that perhaps 90 per cent of these UFO cases could have been explained had the witnesses been better informed or more experienced; had sufficient data been available to investigators, or had proper follow-up facilities been provided.

This still leaves many thousands of problematical sightings, of which a good proportion have been scientifically investigated but which remain unidentified. Consequently any study must start from the fact that this is a problem that ranks in size, at least, with

such other widely reported anomalies as apparitions, poltergeists and ESP phenomena.

Despite the great number of sightings, it remains true that no hard evidence exists that the phenomena have any physical reality whatever. Many photographs exist, both still and moving, of which a few at least have been validated technically by experts, yet none is wholly convincing.

Radar sightings appear to indicate that UFOs possess sufficient substance to generate a radar signal, but psychokinetic (mind over matter) effects, however improbable, cannot be ruled out, so even the radar evidence cannot be regarded as conclusive. Material traces and residues have been reported, photographed and analysed, but they likewise provide no irrefutable proof. The evidence, like that for apparitions, poltergeists and ESP phenomena, remains circumstantial.

It is significant that in recent years there has been a swing away from the "hard" or "nuts and bolts" type of theory to the "soft" or parapsychical. This can be seen as indicating either courage or despair, or even as courage born of despair. But what it also indicates is that a central element in the UFO problem is, simply, that we do not know what kind of a problem it is.

But that there is a problem admits of no doubt. Even if we were to adopt the extreme view that every single UFO sighting is a delusion or a misinterpretation, then that is in itself a sociological phenomenon of outstanding interest.

No other case exists in which some half million persons have recorded, independently and in apparent good faith, their alleged sighting of an object which is claimed by others not to exist at all: the only parallels are in religious experience and in psychical research.

While few take the extreme negative view, few also continue to look for a purely physical explanation – just as few poltergeist investigators expect to trace their phenomena to a mischievous little spirit. So while at first sight the UFO problem may have appeared to be one for the engineer and the astronomer, most students of the subject would now agree that there are good grounds for co-opting the services of the sociologist, the anthropologist and the psychical researcher.

Primary aspects

In the early days of the modern UFO period (i.e. during the years immediately following the Kenneth Arnold sighting of 24 June 1947, which is generally reckoned as playing the same role in the history of ufology as the case of the Fox sisters in Hydesville in 1848 did in the history of mediumship: that is, not the first event of its kind but the one

which marked a turning point in public and scientific attitudes to such events) the question of identity was seen as a question of "whence" rather than of "what".

It seemed, in those far-off days, a possibility that the UFO could be a highly sophisticated device developed by some terrestrial power. For the Americans, this meant the Russians: for occultists, it meant Tibetan bodhisattvas from Shangri-La and points East.

Another interesting school of thought saw them as developments from Nazi flying machines, operating from secret bases in Antarctica to which Hitler and other Nazi leaders retired at the conclusion of World War Two and from which they continue to conduct their divine mission.

Further investigation having made it evident that no terrestrial power could conceivably have achieved such a technological advance, an extra-terrestrial origin was looked for. In one form or another, an extra-terrestrial hypothesis continues to be the version most widely favoured, but it has had to be extensively modified over the years.

It seems evident, for instance, that UFOs cannot be "space ships" in the same sense as our own manned space vehicles. There continues to be no evidence whatever for the extra-terrestrial hypothesis, any more than for any other, and there are many serious objections to it.

Consequently, as already noted, some theorists have looked for alternative sources within our own space/time continuum – from inside a hollow earth, for instance – while others have postulated alternative worlds of various kinds, ranging from parallel universes (invoking anti-matter, black holes and other such concepts) to time-travel (do UFOs contain our own descendants, come back to see how their ancestors used to live?).

Anomalistic features

UFO occupants present just as baffling a challenge as the vehicles they use. Like the UFOs, they come in all shapes and sizes, though a greater degree of consistency is reported: the majority of ufonauts fall into two main categories, one more or less human in size, appearance and behaviour, the other smaller and more animal-like in appearance. The two species have occasionally been observed together, in which cases there are indications that the taller species is the superior, in something like a master/servant relationship.

But these by no means exhaust the range of entities reported. As with UFOs themselves, it is perhaps wrong to apply human logic here: simply because most earth creatures tend to fall into more or less clearly defined species to whose

or a sinister warning?



main characteristics most members of that species conform sufficiently to identify them as members of that species, there is no reason to suppose that in other worlds a very much wider range of mutation is out of the question, any more than it is impossible to believe that each individual might prefer to have a personal transport totally different from his neighbour's!

The history of UFOs presents many anomalistic features. There is evidence to suggest that UFOs comparable to those seen today have appeared throughout history; there is, for instance, a substantial literature linking them with biblical phenomena and other ancient writings.

More immediately relevant are the reports made during the last decades of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th. Furthermore, whether or not we believe what they have to say, we can at least accept that witnesses from these periods were speaking a language we can understand completely.

So when we read, in newspapers of 1897, that airships were seen over the United States, even though we know that the first Zeppelins had yet to be constructed, we can at least make a reasoned assessment of the reports and include them, or discard them, on the same basis as we include or discard current reports.

The same objection might be raised to these reports as to the older ones, that they simply confuse our efforts to grapple with present-day reports, were it not that they raise one very significant feature.

The airships of 1897, like the "mystery aircraft" of the 1930s over Scandinavia and the "ghost rockets" of 1946, have one remarkable characteristic in common with today's UFOs, and one which could be of paramount importance in directing our studies.

All these reports relate to aerial machines which were on the verge of being perfected: that is, though technologically they were beyond the capability of the day, they were not beyond what could be conceived as possible and even achievable. Airships in the 1890s, high-speed all-weather aeroplanes in the 1930s, rockets in the early 1940s, UFOs today – all are, as it were, one step ahead of current feasibility.

An absence of impact

UFOs, like the phenomena of psychical research, do not interfere beyond a very limited degree with the everyday life of the majority of people. If they intrude upon individuals, it is seldom in any lasting way; and though they may have permanent effects on a very few, the great majority of UFO percipients carry on with their lives as if nothing had happened.



This is regarded by many people as the best UFO picture in existence. It was one of two taken by American farmer Paul Trent of McMinnville, Oregon, in May 1950. See "Evidence in camera", Page 17.

What is true of individuals is no less true of mankind in general: up to date, the impact of UFOs on the world has been negligible, for good or ill. In a sense, it is only as a topic for discussion that they have any significance for us at all. Again, this is very similar to the state of affairs as regards psychical research, which touches upon most human lives hardly at all.

The refusal of UFOs, like apparitions, to submit to photography continues to bewilder ufologists and delight the sceptics. Hundreds of alleged UFO photos exist: not one is totally convincing even though in some cases their credentials are excellent.

It should be noted that, just as with psychical researchers, Loch Ness "monster" observers and other investigators, there is a curious tendency of cameras to malfunction, of film to fail to register, of expert cameramen to forget to operate their apparatus intelligently, which does seem to go beyond the bounds of coincidence even if nervousness and surprise are also allowed for.

Similarly, the reluctance of UFOs to leave any tangible traces defies reason. Are the vehicles so perfectly made that no "bits" ever drop off them? Are their occupants so well-behaved that they never leave any litter behind?

The only physical traces are circles of flattened grass or crops – too easily ascribed to wind flurries or lovers – or patches where crops for some reason thereafter refuse to grow – again, open to possible explanation along natural lines such as "fairy rings."

There have been chemical traces, but analysis is usually thwarted either because the substances evaporate or otherwise disappear, or else on exami-

nation they turn out to be recognisable substances of which the most that can be said is that they are "unusually pure."

These and other anomalies add up to a pattern of "teasing" behaviour which is almost the most consistent feature of UFOs and their occupants. In the absence of any more acceptable interpretation, some far-fetched explanations have been advanced: but though they may be the best answers we have, they are seldom good enough to satisfy even those who advance them.

This is where the accounts of contactees – UFO percipients who have made personal contact with ufonauts and have had revealed to them information regarding their nature and mission – play their part. To the serious ufologist, contactee stories are an aspect of the subject as welcome as spirit teachings to the laboratory ESP researcher: he would very much prefer to ignore them.

But to those who cannot bear to live with uncertainty, the contactee stories (Adamski, Fry, Kraspedon, King, and many, many more) offer a coherent structure, giving UFOs a local habitation and a name and accounting for their behaviour in ways acceptable to human reason – or at any rate, as acceptable as are spirit messages, religious teachings or political ideologies to their respective flocks of hungering sheep.

The psi connection

While ufologists have long looked towards psychical research as offering at least a partial solution to their troubles, psychical researchers have been reluctant to recognise that UFO research offers any grist for their mill.

So long as it seemed possible to entertain a purely nuts-and-bolts hypothesis, this was understandable: but the pres-

... a slip in time?

ent state of the inquiry is one in which the psychical researcher can feel on familiar ground and indeed, thanks to his unique background, can make an important contribution.

When a comparatively serious ufological study (John Keel 1970) cites Dr W. J. Crawford's Goligher reports, when another (David Tansley 1977) derives its confirmation from Celia Green's study of lucid dreams, when G. N. M. Tyrrell's *Apparitions* is cited by more than one study, then it is evident that psychical research has already been drawn into the matter, whatever psychical researchers themselves may feel about the subject.

The reluctance of psychical researchers to become involved in the UFO problem stems, of course, not only from the belief that the problem is not a psychical one, but also from the extremely dubious character of so much of the literature. However, it is surely only familiarity which has dulled the psychical researcher's distaste for much of his own subject matter.

A Kentucky farmer is as good or bad a witness as a Sicilian peasant, a Brazilian farmer as credible or incredible as a Victorian parson when it comes to testimony to the paranormal. If some of the theorising about UFOs is far-fetched, the same is no less true of a field of inquiry in which spirit intervention, reincarnation, demonic possession and divine revelation are all regarded as tenable hypotheses.

Anyone familiar with the phenomena of psychical research will immediately recognise several significant parallels, despite the superficially different areas in which the phenomena would seem to fall. Indeed, the parallels start with the very nature of the phenomena – beginning with the question of whether they "exist" at all, then by what means, under what circumstances, and with what purpose?

More specifically, there are certain elements which recur more or less frequently in UFO reports which bear at least an apparent similarity to elements

encountered in psychical research:

1. Apparitions, very similar to those familiar to psychical researchers, are frequently reported in connection with UFO phenomena, sometimes simultaneously and sometimes subsequently.
2. Many alleged contactees have reported being able to communicate with UFO occupants either despite the language barrier, or without the use of any language at all. Those familiar with the word "telepathy" have used it to describe the process, though not necessarily legitimately.
3. Automatic writing has also been used as a means of communication between earthfolk and their UFO contacts, in what would appear to be precisely the same way as writing mediums in the psychical research field.
4. Hypnotic suggestion appears to play a very important part in many UFO cases. Much that is alleged to have occurred during contact cases is supposed to have been concealed from the contactee's conscious knowledge by hypnotic means exerted by the ufonauts, and to have been elicited by hypnotic means.
- It has been suggested that the ufonauts are unaware that we have sufficient knowledge of hypnosis to retrieve such knowledge. Irrespective of the truth or otherwise of the information thus derived, there can be little doubt that the application of hypnosis in such cases is of great interest.
5. Poltergeist phenomena are frequently experienced in association with UFO phenomena.
6. Most contactees report being taken on voyages in UFOs to distant parts of the universe. Such accounts may be a variant of out-of-body experiences.
7. Many participants in close encounters have recorded sensations which suggest induced altered states of consciousness: thus they feel rooted to the ground, watch events without emotion, etc.
8. One item, reported with a curious frequency, is the feeling that many UFO percipients experience of being in some

kind of extrasensory contact with UFOs and/or their occupants. For example, they will report: "I was meant to look up" and so forth. They tell of a sense of being watched, even when they can themselves see no occupant in the UFO. They may be aware somehow of a sense of purpose, which they often relate not so much to occupants seen or unseen as to the UFO itself.

The foregoing are just the most obvious parallels between the two fields of study. It is clear from them that the psychical researcher is likely to find, in the great mass of UFO testimony, much material which is relevant to his own fields of investigation: at the same time, it is no less likely that his own experience will provide a contribution to ufology.

Sometimes this may take the form of clearing away some of the irrelevancies which notoriously crop up in psychical research, and which the researcher has learnt to expect and to cope with, but which may be less familiar to the ufologist. An example would be the tendency of subjects to try to "please" the investigator by giving him what they think he wants, and thus – quite unconsciously – distorting the true facts.

In conclusion, here is part of a letter written to the author of a recent (and highly recommended) Canadian book on UFOs (John Magor, *Our UFO Visitors*, 1977) by John Keel, an American investigator of somewhat extreme views but unquestioned experience: "You have been doing much excellent field work and you are, I suspect, at the point I was at in 1966-67. . . . It may be there are some real UFOs (I would be foolish to discount the possibility) with real physical occupants. But in the majority of cases I have tracked down and investigated I have found myself confronted with something infinitely more fascinating and complex: the apparent manipulation of the human mind by a force which is able to construct elaborate, seemingly-real hallucinations as part of a camouflage to conceal its real nature and purpose." α



Four of the best early cases . . .

UFO REPORT ?

White House UFOs

As July 19, 1952, drew to a close and the citizens of Washington, USA, prepared for bed eight unidentified objects slipped into the skies over America's capital.

They were picked up simultaneously on two radar screens at Washington National Airport, one of which was for long-range work and monitored all aircraft movements in a 100-mile radius of the airport, the other was designed for handling planes in the immediate vicinity.

Both recorded objects which were capable of roaming at between 100 and 130 mph and then accelerating to fantastically high speeds. To the east of Washington's airport was Bolling Air Force Base, and ten miles further east, Andrews Air Force Base. Both were equipped with short-range radar and an intercom system linking them to the civilian airport. And they, too, were picking up the UFOs on their screens. The three plotted one UFO as it streaked across the sky at an incredible 7000 mph.

When the UFOs strayed over the White House and Capitol – both prohibited flying areas – a jet interceptor was called but by the time it arrived the UFOs had vanished. By then the radar operators had received visual confirmation of the objects from civilian airline pilots flying into Washington. In one case a UFO was seen to accelerate away on the radar screens at the very moment that a pilot was reporting its rapid departure to ground control.

Exactly one week later, on July 26, the UFOs came back to Washington and put on a repeat performance. Once again, around 10.30 p.m., the three radars began picking up the same unidentified slow-moving targets. This time two jet interceptors were called to the scene but the UFOs disappeared just as they arrived. No sooner had they departed, however, than the UFOs came back on the radar screens.

The jets were hurriedly recalled and this time the UFOs remained, but when the pilots were guided to the mysterious targets they would accelerate away immediately.

Air Force personnel involved in the official UFO investigation were even able to get to the airport to see the sky spectacular on radar screens. The explanation for the sighting was that temperature inversions, which refract lightwaves, caused the radar and visual sightings.

Tracked by radar

A baffling series of radar and visual sightings of a UFO occurred in the Lakenheath-Bentwaters area of eastern England between 9.20 p.m. and 3.30 a.m. on August 13 and 14, 1956.

They began with a call from Sculthorpe RAF Station (also a US Air Force Station) to Lakenheath RAF Station (another USAF base) asking if they had any targets on their radar scopes. They had just watched an unidentified object travel at 4000 mph across their screens and this had also been seen in the night sky as a blurry light. A C47 aircraft flying over the Suffolk base at 5000 feet also saw the light pass beneath the plane.

Lakenheath's radar operators were immediately alerted to monitor their scopes for the UFO, and each radar was set on a different range – from 10 to 200 miles radius. A special (and secret) system was in use which eliminated entirely ground returns and stationary targets, yet several scopes picked up a stationary object between 20 and 25 miles southwest of the base.

The UFO then began a series of erratic movements, travelling at between 400 to 600 mph (apparently achieving that speed instantly) and then becoming stationary, changing direction between each movement. After about three-quarters of an hour an RAF jet interceptor was scrambled to investigate, and guided towards the UFO by ground control.

When he reached the scene he radioed, "Roger, Lakenheath, I've got my guns locked on him". But then, after a pause, he said, "Where did he go? Do you still have him?" The radar operators had seen the UFO suddenly dart behind the jet and then follow the aircraft at about 500 ft distance.

For ten minutes the pilot tried to shake it off, but his dives, climbs and changes of direction made no difference to the pursuer. Eventually the pilot reported he was running low on fuel and, much to his relief, the UFO stopped following him as he moved out of the area.

The view of Gordon D. Thayer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, who investigated this remarkable sighting, was that it was "the most puzzling and unusual case in the radar-visual file. The apparently rational, intelligent behaviour of the UFO suggests a mechanical device of unknown origin as the most probable explanation of this sighting. . . ."

Evidence in camera

In the early evening of May 11, 1950, a farmer's wife in McMinnville, Oregon, USA, saw a bright, solid object coming towards her. It was tipped at an angle and was silvery in appearance, moving without noise or smoke.

She called to her husband, Paul Trent, but when he did not hear her she ran into the house to fetch him and a camera. The Kodak was loaded with film and Trent was able to take two pictures before the UFO disappeared towards the northwest.

The photographs were published in a local newspaper and were subsequently studied by experts on behalf of the official Condon Committee, set up by the US Air Force to study the UFO phenomenon. Photoanalyst William K. Hartmann concluded:

"This is one of the few UFO reports in which all factors investigated, geometric, psychological, and physical, appear to be consistent with the assertion that an extraordinary flying object, silvery, metallic, disc-shaped, tens of meters in diameter, and evidently artificial, flew within sight of two witnesses."

UFO sceptic Philip Klass, however, has thrown doubt on the authenticity of the McMinnville pictures, working in conjunction with another sceptic and photo enthusiast, Bob Sheaffer. According to Sheaffer the shadows on buildings in the photograph indicate that the two photographs were taken at about 7.30 a.m. in the morning and not at 7.45 p.m.

He was also able to ascertain that the picture which Trent claimed was the first he had taken was, in fact, taken several minutes after the other.

He also suggests that though they took the pictures in the early morning, they pretended they were taken in the evening (when most neighbouring farmers would have been eating dinner) to explain why no one else reported the object in the sky.

But he does not explain why – if it is a hoax – the Trents did not have the sense to take the pictures at the time of day they claimed to have seen the object.

Followed by a UFO

On an unspecified day in August 1953 a ground observer telephoned the Air Defense Command radar station at Ellsworth Air Force Base, near Rapid City, South Dakota, USA, to report a light hovering over the city.

The object was picked up on special height-finding radar at the base which put it at 16,000 feet. It was almost stationary, but then it picked up speed, completed a circle around Rapid City, then returned to its original place. Both the ground observer and the radar operators watched this manoeuvre.

A jet was called to intercept and was able to see the UFO as it approached the area. But as soon as it came within three miles of the mysterious light, the UFO sped off, maintaining that distance between itself and the pursuing jet at all times.

This sighting was first made public by Captain Edward Ruppelt, who headed the USAF's Project Blue Book investigation of UFOs, in his book *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* (1956). He reported what happened next in these words:

"The chase continued on north – out of sight of the lights of Rapid City and the base – into some very black night. When the UFO and the F-84 got about 120 miles to the north, the pilot checked his fuel; he had to come back. . . . Both the UFO and the F-84 had gone off the scope, but in a few minutes the jet was back on, heading for home. Then 10 or 15 miles behind it was the UFO target also coming back."

Another jet was sent up to investigate and once again the UFO sped away, keeping exactly three miles ahead of its pursuer. This pilot – a World War II and Korean veteran – switched on his radar-ranging gunsight which confirmed that he had a solid target in front of him. With that he became scared and broke off the interception, but this time the UFO did not follow the aircraft back to base.

There is no official explanation for the sighting which, Ruppelt said in 1956, "is still the best UFO report in the Air Force files."

THE BRITISH UFO RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

is Britain's leading UFO research and investigation organisation. Founded in 1962, it publishes BUFORA JOURNAL, various booklets, holds monthly lectures in London, arranges annual conferences, and has book and tape lending libraries. UFO-LINCOLN '79 will be the first London International UFO conference, August 26-27, Mount Royal Hotel, near Marble Arch, London.

Send a 9" x 4" SAE for full details to:

Miss Wood (A), Hon. Secretary, BUFORA Ltd,
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Peering into the Unknown

An other-worldly subject for a House of Lords' debate is brought down to earth by a sceptical Government spokesman.

IS IT not time that Her Majesty's Government informed our people of what they know about UFOs?" demanded the Earl of Clancarty in the House of Lords on January 17 this year. "Just suppose the ufonauts decided to make mass landings tomorrow in this country – there could be panic here, because our people have not been prepared."

Despite the earl's fears, his suspicion of a Government cover-up and his demands for an official enquiry, he was alone in his confident interpretation of the facts.

The Government, in the person of Lord Strabolgi, did its best to dispel his anxiety, denied the suggestion that facts were being concealed and declined to take the matter further. This was not before their Lordships, both temporal and spiritual, had debated the issues in the same kind of tolerant, amiable and discursive manner that they might have discussed the Common Market butter mountain, licensing laws or any other matter.

The debate revealed various things: individual prejudices, the problems of credibility and rationalisation, anxieties about possible dangers and even personal experiences of sightings. Above all, it showed the difficulty of coming satisfactorily to terms with the perplexing issues involved.

As a debate that might have thrown more light on the subject of UFOs, it was a failure.

Only the Earl of Clancarty, who moved the debate, seemed to have made up his mind what UFOs were, although the Earl of Kimberley was inclined to accept the possibility of alien spacecraft. Most of the other 13 Lords who participated were more cautious in their appraisal of UFOs. Few accepted them as a threat that justified the spending of public money on investigation, although there was general support for the continued exploration of the subject by the various voluntary organisations involved.

Lord Trefgarne was among those who were highly sceptical that anything spectacular would be turned up. "I have some 2,500 hours as a pilot. I have flown across the Atlantic a few times as a pilot. But I have never seen one."

"Since time immemorial, man has ascribed those phenomena that he could not explain to some supernatural or extraterrestrial agents. Eventually, as scientific wisdom advanced, these phenomena are understood more fully, until now, today, no one takes witchcraft seriously and there are no fairies at the



8th Earl of Clancarty

bottom of my garden."

Yet, where UFOs were concerned, Lord Trefgarne added that he "certainly did not agree with the learned professor, speaking on the radio the other morning, who said: 'Anyone who believes in UFOs is a loony.'"

Neither did the Earl of Kimberley. He declared his support for the Earl of Clancarty's call for a Government enquiry and threw several new ideas into the discussion. He drew attention to the Russian interest in the subject. "Russian scientists see a connection between UFOs and paranormal phenomena. In fact, there is an ever-growing belief that space travel has a connection with telepathy and telekinesis, because cosmonauts in orbit discovered through scientific tests that they have an increased level of telepathic communication."

Following the Earl, Lord Davies of Leek elaborated on the oddness of many UFO sightings. "There is a queerness in the cosmology of the world in which we are now living."

He went on to add that "those who believe in psychic phenomena or Spiritualism and those who believe in the synchronicity of ghosts – as they try to explain them – should not scoff at the possibility of these unidentified objects. We know that poltergeists exist; we know about their activities. Therefore, do not be so ready to scoff at UFOs when, you will agree with me that poltergeists exist. This is a serious debate. It deserves study and understanding."

The Lord Bishop of Norwich was deeply concerned because "the mystery surrounding UFOs today – and I think it is helped by the variety of films and

programmes on the subject – is in danger of producing a 20th-century superstition in our modern and scientific days which is not unlike the superstition of past years."

The bishop claimed that some Christian researchers suggest that those who become deeply involved in the religious aspects of the UFO situation "come under a psychic domination which can cause serious distress to them and to their personal life."

It was left to Lord Kings Norton to deliver a crisp, cogent and open-minded summary of the facts. "The desirability of getting rational and acceptable explanations for the odd phenomena which are being reported – even if, like some other paranormal phenomena, they are subjective – in my opinion is not, or should not be merely to satisfy our curiosity. . . ."

"The sooner that each reported sighting or landing is satisfactorily explained, the better. It is no good just laughing them off or trying to laugh them off; we must seek the truth and tell it." He strongly supported a State-backed enquiry.

Lord Gainford claimed to "have seen a UFO a little while ago. It was on 31st December about 8 p.m. All right, my Lords, have a good laugh, it was Hogmanay!"

Finally, Lord Strabolgi, for the Government, quashed any hope of an official enquiry. In reviewing the reports, he claimed that there was no reason to suspect that our airspace was being menaced by alien craft. Nor was there any evidence from other nations, including the USA and France, to cause concern on that score.

He added that "there is no cover up and no security ban." The reason why access to Ministry files was out of the question, Lord Strabolgi explained, was because they contained "voluminous correspondence from people, and we cannot divulge the identity of the correspondents."

Under the Public Record Acts, they are protected by the 30-year rule. Not till that period has elapsed can their contents be revealed. "The earliest reports the Ministry of Defence hold are dated 1962."

He rounded up his conclusions about the controversy by saying "the truth is simple. There really are many strange phenomena in the sky, and these are invariably reported by rational people. But there is a wide range of natural explanations to account for such phenomena. There is nothing to suggest to Her Majesty's Government that such phenomena are alien space craft." α

Lyall Watson: the call of strange gods

ALPHA talks to the biologist and writer who has probably gone further than any other scientist towards demystifying the supernatural. His conclusions are freshly provocative.



"Lifetide has brought me full circle. I have begun to answer questions now instead of just posing them."

"You've got to start off with scientific method. But when that doesn't work you've got to abandon it."

MY FIRST witnessing of what has been called psychic surgery in the Philippines was shattering. I was very disturbed and very unhappy about it because it was, as far as I could see, real. To my satisfaction, it was actually taking place and I wasn't being duped and I wasn't hallucinating. I was still a straight, good scientist. But what I was seeing didn't make good scientific sense.

"I had no way of coping with it at all. I was suddenly cast adrift from all the rationale of scientific method. For more than a year, I was desperately unhappy."

Today, Lyall Watson, the 39-year-old biologist and writer, does not shatter quite as easily. He has learnt to accept the inexplicable at face value. Sitting in his Oxford home, surrounded by icons and archaeological trophies, he talked about the rich pattern of his past and his current work.

His new book, *Lifetide*, offers a tentative explanation as to how maverick, paranormal phenomena could fit into the picture we are building up of the universe.

In doing so, he has taken his own path, guided more by an intuitive suspicion of what might, in the end, make sense rather than pursuing the analytical dissection of the paradoxes which he has encountered.

Not everyone will like what he says. He has a love/hate regard for science: an obvious fascination with the worlds it reveals, but an impatience with its limitations. "I know now as a biologist, and it becomes more and more clear with every discovery, that we know next to nothing. Even the most simple things like what makes us dream, how we remember any-

thing, why we sleep – these are fundamental questions which despite years of research, we still know next to nothing about."

Lifetide is the latest in a series of books that began with *Supernature*, which was the kind of overnight success that authors dream about. It has sold over a million copies since it was published in 1973, and has been translated into 17 other languages. All the more surprising, since it was dashed out in five weeks while Watson was summering on the Greek island of Ios. "I got the paper from the local butcher, grey stuff," he recalls. Back in London, he put together a bibliography, tidied up the text – six more weeks work – and handed over the manuscript to his agent.

Somehow, without any publicity, word had got around. The initial print order of 2,000 was sold out in the first day. Another two editions came out and disappeared almost as fast during the same month. The voracious appetite with which copies were snapped up was as much a tribute to the book as an index of the widespread interest in the subject matter. Yet it was not the first to deal with the inexplicable, mysterious and supernatural aspects of the world around us. So what was it that captured people's imagination?

Perhaps it was because *Supernature* waded into the unknown from the shallow end rather than plunging into the depths of the barely credible. It asked more questions than it answered. But it did so in an intelligent and stimulating style so often lacking in other accounts of the same subjects. There was enough scientific gloss to attract readers who would otherwise shun material often stamped with the hallmark of crank

interest. But not too much to baffle and bemuse the non-technical. Watson had found the *via media* that allowed the public to explore strange territory without abandoning their intellectual dignity.

Since *Supernature*, there have been three other books: *The Romeo Error*, which explored the ambiguous twilight world of life after death, *Gifts of Unknown Things*, an autobiographical account of his stay in the magical community of an Indonesian island, and, most recently, *Lifetide*. He describes this, as he does his earlier books, as a position paper. "These books are useful to me because they help me to order my thoughts. If you don't write it down, you don't really know what your feelings are about things."

"The latest one is the last, I think, in the cycle. It has somehow brought me full circle. I have begun to answer questions now instead of just posing them."

It is a cycle that really began with that summer in Ios. "It seemed to be the centre of the counter culture that year. Everyone who was interesting seemed to turn up there, and we talked about things like astrology, reincarnation and I realised that although I had not deliberately researched these things, I knew more about them than I thought." From this ferment of discussion and argument, *Supernature* was born, the first position paper, ordering and correlating ideas, theories and observations stored up till then.

It was a fresh work that reads like an exciting discovery. Which it was: until Ios, Watson had not pursued a purposeful interest in the paranormal and the paradoxes of the world around us. He describes it as a "broad, objective, fairly rational survey" of the subject. But it was the feedback that he received that was

crucial. "I got involved and then there was no turning back."

Born in Southern Africa, he developed an early interest in biology, particularly marine biology. The nearby coast afforded ample opportunities for exploring the rich sea life of the coral reef.

After taking his first higher degrees in South Africa, Watson came to Europe and studied with Conrad Lorenz at the Max Planck Institute before coming to England via Holland.

In England, he worked under Desmond Morris "a very freewheeling, catholic scientist, an enthusiast." In 1962, when he had completed his Ph.D in animal biology, Watson took off, roaming the world and expanding his field of knowledge as he felt prompted. During the sixties he worked in the Middle East on archaeological sites, in Africa on palaeontology and continued to develop his interest in biology and anthropology.

"Psychologically, I suppose that I am not predisposed to specialise. I don't lay out a year ahead what I want to look at. It seems to take its own course and follows a momentum. And has been doing so for the past 17 years."

Supernature was not the first book – Watson had written a biology book *Omnivore* that had been "successful in a modest way" – but it was this which gave the financial freedom to travel and track down the paradoxes that fascinated him. It also set off an avalanche of correspondence; "at one point there were a thousand letters a week. Some of these opened up new trails." Not all, though. "Some of them were really cranky, in fact about 90 per cent. The psychic world, like the zoo world, seems to inspire nuts. I soon learned to discard letters written on both sides of ruled paper in three different colours and liberally underlined. Nevertheless, there were the three per cent or so that were absolutely fascinating, most of which I followed up."

It was one of these leads, inspired by the Italian translation of *Supernature*, that led to the home of the Venetian girl whose story opens *Lifetide*. In common with a good number of tales of paranormal phenomena, this anecdote is as teasing, surrealistic and superficially inconsequential as so many others in the literature. It concerns a little girl of five who has the unusual and disconcerting ability to turn tennis balls inside out. As if by magic, the soft napp of the ball disappears, and, in its place is the hard, black rubber of the inside. But there are no everted tennis balls to be seen. "After a while, they turn back the right way. The longest I've kept one is 48 hours," says Watson.

"If I had seen a child do this five years ago, it would have destroyed me. I saw it first four years ago and it's something I don't worry about at all."

If the phenomenon is remarkable, it, in common with spoon bending, is hardly useful. For Watson, these spectacular

effects are only signposts for investigation. "What interests me is not the phenomenon as much as the person who has produced it."

This naturally raises the central question: how do you plumb these unknown depths?

"You've got to start off with scientific method," says Watson. "But when that doesn't work you've got to abandon it. If you decide it isn't applicable, only goes so far, there are two things you can do."

"You can either decide that science is right and that this phenomenon is wrong, or doesn't exist. Or you have to adopt another kind of approach. This is a more scientific way of dealing with it, not to dismiss it out of hand because you can't find the formula, but find another way."

Scientific method suggests several avenues for research, particularly the monitoring of the brain rhythms and other physiological read-out of individuals capable of producing paranormal effects. But even this can lead the researcher astray, claims Watson.

"Geller and Matthew Manning have shown that they can move the needle on gauges without influencing the machine inside at all. So what you're reading doesn't mean a damn thing."

"I think that the only way to approach

We can change reality by changing our minds

it, and to me, as a biologist, this makes a lot of sense, is to use sensitivity. The most sensitive instrument we have is the human body. We must take account of what it tells you and what other people think they are feeling."

His method leads to all sorts of unorthodox avenues: "old wives' tales and superstition. Somewhere in there is a way of approaching this thing in a biological, living way which is ultimately going to tell us more about us, not the phenomena. That must be what we are interested in: what we can and cannot do and what we mean."

Lifetide goes some way towards this goal. Watson feels that the unconscious, itself a heavily veiled mystery, is the key to understanding the paranormal. Greatly influenced by Jung's theory of the collective conscious, he has extended the notion to suggest that not only does it forge a link between all humans but that it is part of something more universal. This something is what Watson refers to as the lifetide which occasionally throws up spoon-bending and tennis-ball everting effects. Yet, he insists, they "in themselves mean nothing. I would like to know more about the tide and less about the flotsam."

Of course, he is not the first scientist to tread this path of investigation. The Society for Psychical Research, among other bodies, has been a clearing house for detailed study of the paranormal since

the last century. But for Watson this way of investigating the subject is dry and irrelevant. Indeed, he does not hold out much hope of arriving at insights by following yesterday's scientific method.

"I don't think that paranormal research has progressed very far. And I don't think that it will because this kind of research is asking all the wrong questions in the wrong way. It is looking still in a Newtonian way for mechanical answers and asking mechanical questions."

He writes off the laboratory investigation of ESP and psychic powers with such experiments as dice guessing and Zener cards as "dull and boring", a meaningless way of going about things. "The investigators are trying to justify themselves to a scientific tradition with work that doesn't fit into that tradition, and never can be made to fit in."

He prefers to follow the hints contained in the new physics that allows for a far greater participation by the mind in moulding our experience of the world. He thinks that our consciousness is involved in the creation of the order we describe as every-day reality and even that "we can change reality by changing our minds." And he is not just speaking of perceptual experience. We may be responsible for manifestations and materialisations in the physical world. "There are very few limits to the power of the unconscious," he says.

So does Watson see a time when we understand the workings of our minds more fully that we will add a new range of mind-power abilities?

"No, I don't think so. That is thinking technologically about them, trying to put them to industrial use. You'll never be able to do it – I don't think that they work like that."

"We mustn't expect them to have practical applications which are going to help us in the space race or cold war. The Russian attempt to bend telepathy into a cold-war weapon is self-defeating. But I am convinced that exploration of it is important because it tells us about ourselves."

Far from being easily manipulated, paranormal phenomena and experiences are more likely to be some kind of reflex response, in Watson's opinion, tied up with the obscure workings of the unconscious. It is no accident in his view that the accounts of UFO sightings peaked around the New Year in the New Zealand episode.

"There has been a spate of UFO sightings over the period and incidents have been increasing. I see meaning in this. I think that they have come at a very critical juncture. The culmination of Western technology was putting a man on the moon. It was a great triumph and at the same time it was a great disappointment. We had high hopes of it but it hasn't changed our lives to any great extent."

"What the landing and the probes

Continued on Page 31

The ghost of Appuldurcombe House

After more than four centuries of mental torment the spirit of Mary Targett has been released from the ruins of an old mansion on the Isle of Wight.

HALF A MILE west of Wroxall on the Isle of Wight stands the ruin of a house which was once a masterpiece of Baroque architecture. Rebuilt more than 250 years ago, Appuldurcombe House became unoccupied in 1909 since when its only visitors have been tourists.

Despite its derelict state and long history, Appuldurcombe House is not said to be haunted. Indeed, its lack of a ghost gets a special mention in a little booklet, *Ghosts of the Isle of Wight* (Steedman & Anker, 1977, £1). But the experience of Margo Williams, the medium whom we featured in our last issue and who lives on the island, suggests that the ruin did have a ghost.

Margo Williams "hears" voices from the past. She takes dictation from the voices and the scripts, when complete, present fascinating accounts of the lives of a wide range of people. For the most part, these "drop-in" communicators arrive unsought and Margo has no control over them. But her encounter at Appuldurcombe House suggests that she might well be able to "tune in" to ghostly manifestations, providing detailed information about them and even helping to release them from their earthbound state.

The Appuldurcombe story began when an acquaintance, Mrs Jenny Gibbons, visited the ruin and felt decidedly uneasy. She had the impression that in the past a horse had been severely whipped, and she asked Margo Williams to accompany her to the ruin, without revealing what she sensed.

Margo, her husband Wally, and Mrs Gibbons went to the old house next day – on 24 June 1978 – and although it was pleasant and warm Margo felt so cold that she had to wear an anorak.

After a very short while Margo heard a woman's voice and began writing. She returned on the following Thursday and took further dictation and between the 24th and 29th, eight scripts were received (some in her Isle of Wight home).

The ghost began with an appeal:

"Please, please, hear me. He desired me. He said I was comely. I was but a dairymaid here. Please, please, I have waited so long, so long. Old Targett, my father. Been here for years. Please, please hear me. His tongue as sweet as honey, so pleading with me. I met him by the big clump of trees where he deflowered me.

"Richard, where are you? Please help

me, please, please. My baby I called Thomas. Please, please help me to find him. He cared not how I fared after he gave me some money. My pa was so upset. Please, please, I try to look for him. . . .

"The mark of the whip on my cheek I carried to my grave, yet undying love I had for 'ee Richard. 'Ee gave me money and looked to Thomas but wanteth me not. Until I find Richard I will stay by the house for eternity. Please help me find Richard. I know he was put in anger with me, but once he desired me without my leave. Now I desire 'ee Richard. 'Ee called me Mary, where art 'ee Richard? 'Ee was the only one who called me Mary. . . ."

Having uncovered a ghost, the Williamses and their friend wondered what they should do next. Wally, who tries to verify every message his wife receives, thought this one would be impossible to check, though it seemed likely that a famous islander, Sir Richard Worsley – a notorious rake who died in the early 1800s – might have been the ghost's lover. His preliminary research produced no account of Mary Targett.

But then, while he was at Nunwell House – another historic building which was the home of a famous island family, the Oglanders – Wally came across *The Oglander Memoirs*, and later leafing through the volume he found a chapter entitled "Ye History of Ye Worsley Family," written by Sir John Oglander (1595–1648).

"Reading through this chapter," Wally recalls, "I was absolutely amazed to come across a little paragraph . . . and there it all was. There was a previous man of the same name, Richard Worsley, who was the equivalent of the present governor of the island around 1550, and he produced a bastard son Thomas by a dairymaid, Mary Targett."

The entry read:

"Thomas Woorsely of Chale wase a bastard begotten by Mr Rychard Woorsely of Apledorcombe on ye bodie of one Urie Targett's dawghtor who dwelt at Whatchingwell and this mayd wase his dearymade and a good hand-som wench. This Mr Thomas Woorseley wase a braue, wyse and stout gentleman, liued well and gott a good estate owt of Chale ferme, beinge all that wase by his father left unto him."

Wally found that Richard Worsley died in 1565 and was buried at Godshill church, so they all went to find his grave. And the ghost apparently went with

them for in the church, using Richard's tomb as a writing table, Margo received a final poignant message from Mary Targett.

"Richard, I must find 'ee quickly, quickly. Richard, I must find 'ee. I have found 'ee Richard! Thank 'ee, thank 'ee. I can go onwards. Richard I love 'ee."

This ghostly reunion left Margo and her friend in tears.

Since then she has visited several other places on the island and has contacted other ghostly entities who have told their stories; even where there is no reported haunting. And she has apparently released other earthbound spirits, too. By the end of February 1979 a total of 33 ghosts had dictated their confessions and Wally has fully identified 12 of them.

It has to be said that sceptics will easily pick holes in the story of the Appuldurcombe House ghost. The script, for a start, is not in the language of the time. But Margo and Wally believe from information in scripts produced in other cases that a spirit guide of the Victorian era helped Mary Targett to overcome the communications barrier – hence the more modern language.

The testimony also rests entirely on the statements of the medium involved, her husband, and an acquaintance. That, again, will not help sceptics take the account at face value. But in November Margo revisited Appuldurcombe with a famous researcher who witnessed a second ghost start to write at a spot where several people had reported ghostly music (this case has not yet been completed).

Margo's experiences at other haunted houses suggest that it is a repeatable phenomenon and one that could be put to the test. Already, more than a dozen people, not known to Margo previously, have been involved and have witnessed the writing.

It is hoped that Margo Williams will take part in experiments with researchers who will select sites to be visited and accompany her to them, to see if any phantoms can identify themselves.

Margo Williams has already indicated her willingness to participate in such tests and, as we go to press, has just completed a three-day ghost-hunting expedition with *Alpha*.

We challenged her to come to the mainland and try picking up voices at different places – without telling her where she would be taken. The results of this fascinating experiment will appear in our next issue. α

Dreaming your future

Dr Montague Ullman, leading American dream researcher, explains why we sometimes catch a tantalising glimpse of the future while we are asleep.

THE MAJORITY of premonitions which the newly-established Alpha Premonitions Bureau will receive during its one-year pilot study will undoubtedly occur in dreams. But why?

When Dr John Barker analysed 31 premonitions of the Aberfan disaster (see *Alpha* issue 1) he found that 28 occurred in dreams and only three in a waking state. When Abraham Lincoln "foresaw" his own death the vision came in a dream. Mark Twain, too, saw his young brother lying in a coffin in a dream, and that vision came to pass, down to the smallest detail.

Why should dreams open the door to the future? Dr Montague Ullman, a New York psychiatrist who has studied the psychic (or psi) element in dreams for many years, offers an explanation.

"When we dream we are in an altered state of consciousness," says Dr Ullman. "It is a state of consciousness that is available to everyone, every night. And a dream is a natural psi retrieval system."

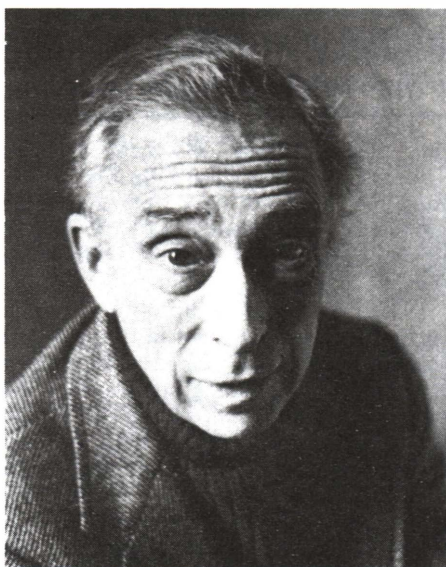
Dr Ullman expounded his views to *Alpha* (and at a Society for Psychical Research lecture) on a visit to London last year, and he illustrated the intrusion of a future event in a dream with a personal anecdote. One night, he dreamed that he met a colleague, Dr Stanley Krippner, and found he had a massive, bleeding lesion on his face. He awoke with a start and "a sinking sense of terror and upset at the kind of image I had produced."

Later that day, Dr Ullman found himself walking in an unfamiliar part of New York and was surprised to see, out of the corner of his eye, a man whose walk reminded him of Dr Krippner – "a kind of hunched over shuffle."

He wondered why his colleague was in that part of New York. But when he crossed the road and got a good look at the man he realised it was not Dr Krippner. However, "he had the same, horrible ulcerating lesion around his mouth."

Dr Ullman was not unduly surprised by the precognitive element in his dream. For many years in private practice he had encountered patients' dreams which contained a remarkable amount of psychic content, and at the time of his own dream he and Dr Krippner were working together at the famous Dream Laboratory, at Maimonides Medical Centre, State University of New York, studying telepathic response in dreamers.

"During the 1950s, while I sat behind the couch, every now and then a patient would come up with a dream that would just set me back because of the nature and amount of personal information it contained about me. The patient did not know it linked with me nor could the



Dr Montague Ullman

person have acquired that knowledge without having a private detective on my trail for the previous 48 or 72 hours."

A typical example was the young woman who dreamt that her boyfriend had offered her a drink which was a mixture of cream and alcohol. A leopard also featured in the dream. What the dreamer could not have known was that on the same night that she had the dream, Dr Ullman and his wife were attending a meeting at the New York Academy of Medicine at which a research psychiatrist showed a film about his work in which he made a cat alcoholic by giving it a half milk/half alcohol mixture.

"Now I have listened to many dreams, before and since, and never heard one about a cream/alcohol mixture, particularly in combination with a member of the cat family. The patient who had that dream was a seamstress who knew nothing about the Academy of Medicine, my being there, or the nature of the lecture. But her dream was not 'borrowed' from my experience haphazardly. It was a very dramatic metaphorical expression of many of her tensions."

It was experiences like this, coupled with his keen interest in paranormal phenomena (he is president of the American Society for Psychical Research) which led Dr Ullman into active dream research. The breakthrough for a controlled study had occurred in the early 1950s when University of Chicago scientists discovered that it was possible to detect when a person was dreaming. It was noticed that the sleepers' brain wave patterns showed periods of electrical activity, similar to the waking state, which were accompanied by rapid eye movements (REM).

When subjects were wakened at this point they usually reported that they

were having a dream. Dr Ullman realised that this discovery could be used to see if it were possible to implant and extract psychic information from a dreamer's mind. The brain and REM monitoring made it possible to question the dreamer immediately, before the dream was forgotten.

Dr Ullman devised a simple procedure which involved selecting target pictures at random while the subject was asleep, and for an agent to try to "transmit" the picture to the subject when dreaming began. He discussed his experiment with Eileen Garrett, one of the world's most famous mediums and president of the Parapsychology Foundation, and she was immediately enthusiastic. Not only did she fund the project and make two rooms available at the foundation's headquarters but she also put two of her research personnel – Karlis Osis and E. Douglas Dean – at Dr Ullman's disposal. She even agreed to be the first experimental subject.

On 6 June, 1960, Dr Osis tore three pictures from *Life* magazine, sealed them in separate envelopes and gave them to Mrs Garrett's secretary to take home. She was asked to keep them by the telephone and the plan was that as soon as Mrs Garrett fell asleep in the dream laboratory and began dreaming, one of the researchers would phone her secretary, ask her to open one of the envelopes and concentrate on the picture. Mrs Garrett would then be woken up and asked what she had dreamed about.

The experiment did not go according to plan, however. The researchers monitored the sleeping medium but detected no REM period to indicate she was dreaming. So they did not wake her, nor did they put a call through to her secretary.

When she woke up naturally, Eileen Garrett did remember a dream. She had seen horses running up hill, reminding her of a scene from the film *Ben Hur*. It was only two weeks later that Dr Ullman discovered, by chance, that one of the three target pictures in the sealed envelopes was a colour photograph of a chariot race from *Ben Hur*.

It was a stunning correspondence, but one that could not be explained as telepathy between agent and dreamer. Instead, it appeared to be dream clairvoyance. Nevertheless, it encouraged the dream researchers to carry out an 18-month study with a very wide range of subjects, which proved to their satisfaction that some subjects (even those who claimed no psychic powers) did dream paranormally in the laboratory. The next step was to conduct the tests under stricter controls.

Dr Ullman moved the project to the

Maimonides Medical Center where he was director of the Community Mental Health Center. He obtained financial support for the Dream Laboratory in 1962, with the aid of a prominent parapsychologist, Gardner Murphy, who was then director of the Menninger Foundation.

Stanley Krippner joined as director of the laboratory in 1974 and Dr Ullman was associated with the project for 14 years, during which time it was the only dream laboratory in the world devoted exclusively to parapsychological work.

Using young adults chosen for their ability to recall dreams and their positive attitude to ESP, the researchers set up an experimental procedure using art prints as targets. These were selected for their vividness, colour, simplicity and difference from each other. During dream telepathy sessions the targets were chosen at random and an agent would concentrate on the selected picture while the subject was dreaming.

At the end of each night, transcripts of the subject's dreams were sent with the complete pool of 12 target pictures to allow a panel of three independent judges to match up a dream with what they thought was the chosen picture. There were a remarkable number of correspondences in the dreams which they recorded. On one night a woman agent was concentrating on a painting by Bellows which shows boxer Jack Dempsey being knocked out of the ring. Dempsey came back and won the fight.

The subject, an artist, had never been to a fight and he had no interest in boxing. He began dreaming about posts standing up from the ground, then said: "Something about Madison Square Garden and a boxing fight . . . I had to go to Madison Square Garden to pick up tickets to a boxing fight and there were a lot of tough punks around – people connected with the fight around the place." The Dempsey fight took place at Madison Square Garden and this dream – not surprisingly – was regarded as a direct hit by the judges.

Dr Ullman next concentrated on tests with a particularly good subject, Dr William Erwin, as the dreamer and Sol Feldstein, a doctoral student, as the sender. The sessions produced remarkable results: six nights out of eight there were direct hit scores, and on the other two there were very high score hits. A statistical analysis of these results showed that "dream telepathy was indeed occurring . . . with odds on the order of one thousand to one against chance."

The dream experiments were not confined to single agent-subject tests. The researchers also tried multi-agent transmission to more than one subject, and again the results were highly significant.

In early 1971 the pop group The Grateful Dead were giving six concerts in New York, 45 miles from the Dream Laboratory. The rock musicians had visited Dr Krippner at the laboratory and they

agreed to ask the 2,000 young people at their concerts to act as telepathic agents. The audience was shown a picture of English psychic Michael Bessent and then a slide, chosen at random, was projected onto a screen for 15 minutes while the group continued to play. This procedure was repeated at each of the six concerts.

Bessent scored four "direct hits" out of six, but the researchers concluded that there was no evidence that using 2,000 agents instead of one produced any greater accuracy than usually occurs. They did try a further experiment, however, with intriguing results.

A second subject, Felicia Parise, was also asked to try to pick up the telepathic picture from the pop concert fans – but they were not told about her participation. She scored only one direct hit out of six, yet three of her "miss" results scored very highly when compared with targets for other nights – suggesting that her ESP may have been displaced in time, moving backward or forward to perceive the targets.

The full details of these and other experiments are set out in *Dream Telepathy* (Turnstone Books, London, 1973, £3.95) which Drs Ullman and Krippner wrote with Alan Vaughan.

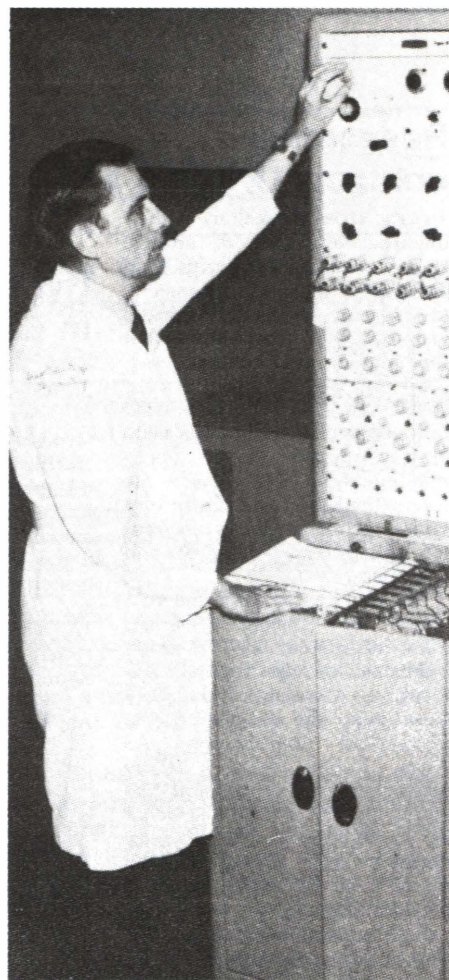
Now that he is no longer associated with the Maimonides dream laboratory Dr Ullman has taken his work one step further and has attempted to generate "a psi-activated field between people," working with a small group of people all of whom are interested in dreams and their content.

He theorises that, in a dream state, we have the ability to "extrude a psychic satellite" which can take a view of the whole waking system and offer a more penetrating projection of the future. "What I'm really saying," says Dr Ullman, "is that in some way we so drastically alter our relationship with space and time – perhaps move out of space and time – that we then experience the same organism in a completely different way."

He suggests, too, that whereas we are concerned with our individuality and autonomy when awake, during sleep we move into a different arrangement with ourselves and take a different view of what is important. "And what is important to the sleeping organism – the view from the dreaming state – is the nature of the connections which exist between me and other significant people." What the dreamer comes up with as a result is accurate and honest information about his relational field to other human beings.

"My hunch about psi," says Dr Ullman, "is that it has something to do with connecting living tissues together, in some basic primitive way."

He has certainly found evidence that a group working together appear to establish a dream rapport which is highly significant. His American SPR group has been studying dreams collectively for



Dr Stanley Krippner checks monitoring equipment in the dream laboratory.

more than a year, in an attempt to generate psychic activity in the sleeping state, and no report of their work has yet been compiled. But Dr Ullman cited one incident which illustrates the sort of thing they are experiencing.

"During the course of a week preceding our meeting I was on a diet. Diets don't sit well with me and I lasted about six days. Then, on the day before the meeting, I weakened. I passed a New York delicatessen and the smell was just . . . Well, I had a delicious meat sandwich and pickles and French fried potatoes and just went completely off the diet.

"When we compared dreams the following day, 12 out of 15 dreams had references to food! That is in contrast to all the other weeks when there were one, two or possibly three references to food."

We still do not know what causes us to dream. And the subject matter of our dreams is clearly influenced by repressed feelings, fears and ambitions. But the telepathic dream is not an isolated event, as Dr Ullman's research has shown, and psychic influence may play a larger role in our dreams than we expect.

It's an area we can all explore: using the altered state of consciousness into which we slip naturally each night, and the "biofeedback" which the visual imagery of our dreams present to us. α

Researcher contacts UFO?

INVESTIGATORS are jealous of their impartial approach to strange claims. Whether they are probing poltergeists or hunting monsters, the majority of researchers try to keep an open mind about what they may or may not discover.

So you can imagine the consternation of Paul Grant, a UFO investigator, who found it was no longer possible to be open-minded about the subject. He found himself at the centre of a variety of extraordinary encounters with ghosts, poltergeists and alien beings.

The story is told for the first time in *Bufora Journal*, (November/December 1978 issue) published by the British UFO Research Association. But Paul Grant is not the real name of the 27-year-old investigator. As Andy Collins – the fellow researcher who uncovered the story – put it: “A UFO researcher as a contactee is like a police detective with a long criminal record”, so he has adopted a pseudonym.

Collins and Grant anticipate that a report, comprising over 100 pages, which the former has compiled will form the centrepiece of a book involving the deeper aspects of contactee experiences.

Disappearing pilot

SOME new information on the mysterious disappearance of young Australian pilot Frederick Valentich (see *Alpha* issue 1) throws doubt on certain aspects of the story. *Bufora Journal* (January/February 1979) says it is reported that Valentich had not asked King Island airport to switch on the runway lights, which is – to say the least – suspicious.

Valentich was said to have been on a visit to King Island, at night, when he reported an encounter with a UFO. We printed the full transcript of his conversation with Melbourne control. It ended abruptly with a metallic sound . . . since when neither Valentich nor his Cessna aircraft have been seen.

The *Bufora Journal* report also says that the police on King Island could not find anyone who was selling crayfish – said to be the reason for his night flight – and his girl friend said he had arranged to pick her up at 7.30 p.m. to go to a disco, but from his flight plan he could not have got back to Melbourne before 9 p.m.

The mystery remains, of course. But the transcript takes a

lot of explaining. On the other hand, an elaborate hoax will seem much more likely to many people than that Valentich was abducted by a UFO.

Hynek to lecture in London

WHILE on the subject of UFOs, British enthusiasts will be pleased to know that Dr J. Allen Hynek, former Professor of Astronomy at Northwestern University, is to take part in a London conference in August. He will be a participant in the First London International UFO Congress, which is being jointly hosted by BUFORA and Contact International (UK). The venue is the Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, on August 26 and 27.



Dr J. Allen Hynek, astronomer and UFO expert.

Psychic warfare

IN VIEW of our feature, this issue, on Soviet psychic “warfare” and Korchnoi’s complaint about parapsychological influences, I was intrigued to read a reference to American involvement in the same field, in the latest *International Journal of Paraphysics* (Vol 12, Nos 5 & 6). And the authors of the paper are Russian!

The article is titled, “Usage of Parapsychology in Criminal Investigation,” and its authors, Nikolai Kitaev and Nikolai Ermakov, state that in the USA from 1942 to 1946 there existed an organising centre of strategic authorities, a politico-military agency which was the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The chief of this agency was General William Donovan, who during World War One was influential as the man behind President Woodrow Wilson.

According to the authors, he was not averse to using the talents of thieves, safe-breakers and hypnotists to further the aims of the agency. They add:

“Donovan knew that his old enemy, the chief of Hitler’s military agency Admiral Kanaris, also operated in a similar manner. It seems to be recognised that Donovan used several telepaths, but the details of their operation remain a secret.

“It appears reasonable that this astute general would not expend money on people without demonstrable parapsychological abilities; the candidates for this agency had to pass not only stiff examinations but tests of their abilities before a severe committee.”

Their report, incidentally, first appeared in the Soviet journal *Ural Review* (No 1, 1977) and the authors are a procurator and an examining magistrate.

Acclaim for British Healer

I WAS pleased to read a report in *Psychic News* about British healer, Clive Harris, who has been treating the sick in Poland. The last time I saw Clive was on British television, giving a very impressive demonstration of his healing powers in a studio test. Since then he has not been featured in the national media, but I had heard he was working abroad.

Apparently, his services were in such demand in Poland that tickets were required to gain entrance to his meetings.

Clive has been a full-time healer since his teens – he is now in his 30s – and has had notable success in treating drug addicts, as well as most other health conditions.

Ill-fated?

THE American *Fate* magazine has run into difficulties because of increasing postal charges. Publisher Curtis Fuller makes a bitter complaint (February issue) about

US Government policy which he says has put many small magazines in a precarious state.

“We are fighting to survive,” he told his readers, “and it will take us more than a year to recover from our present losses even if we can increase our prices by 20%. If we don’t make it, we will put a tombstone over this magazine bearing the inscription: KILLED by the US Post Office.”

Fate is an old-established and well-loved magazine in the paranormal field and it would certainly be a loss if it were to close . . . particularly for the many advertisers who use the magazine to promote their bizarre goods and services.

Old Masters at work?

BEFORE the trial of artist Tom Keating was abandoned because of his ill-health, and the charges against him dropped, some unexpected evidence was given about the way in which he produced his impressive fakes.

Keating, together with art dealer David Lionel Evans, was charged at the Old Bailey with deception and conspiracy.

Giving evidence on February 1, Keating said:

“Sometimes my pastiches were so good I can say with all due modesty that I think there was some curious combination with the old master [Goya] himself.

“Some painters say it is Spiritualism. I am not a Spiritualist, but there were times when the master came down and took over the painting. It was terribly difficult to tell the difference between his work and my own.

“I have had that experience about 20 times in my life. It happened with Goya. That was so good I marked it in white lead so if it was X-rayed it would be seen that it was not a Goya.”

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EXTRAORDINARY POWERS

Broadcasts from beyond

Etta Wriedt was like a radio transmitter. In her presence voices spoke, identifying themselves as people who had died. They gave information about their lives and some spoke in foreign languages.

DURING the early years of this century a modest American woman, Mrs Etta Wriedt, became world-famous for her ability to produce spirit voices under conditions which precluded fraud.

Visitors to her home were able to tell her where they wanted her to sit so that they could observe her closely, and they could also opt for daylight, gaslight or totally dark seances (the latter produced the best results but many preferred to experience her mediumship in the light, initially, to satisfy themselves they were not being tricked).

A cone-shaped trumpet was placed between the medium and her visitor. If it was an illuminated seance, the sitter would then be invited to pick up the trumpet and place the large end to an ear. From inside this simple megaphone they were addressed by faint voices which often gave names and information that the medium could not have known.

When Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore paid his first visit to her, at her detached wooden villa in Detroit, Michigan, on 6 January 1909, he asked for the proceedings to be carried out in gaslight. He heard voices inside the trumpet but they were faint and the passing traffic from workers leaving the city made it difficult to understand them.

The seance was regarded as a failure by Mrs Wriedt (who accepted money only if the sessions were successful) so she invited him to return later that night to join a small group of sitters.

This second session was conducted in the dark, during which the trumpet levitated and voices came from it addressing the visitors. These voices were much stronger than those he had heard earlier. Among the communicators was one of the vice-admiral's brother officers who identified himself.

Vice-Admiral Moore subsequently had many seances with the Detroit medium and he paid a glowing tribute to her extraordinary powers in his book, *Glimpses of the Next State* (London, 1911). He testified:

"In that quiet room at Detroit I have heard, through the trumpet, the sounds of expression of nearly every human emotion except anger . . . I have heard three voices talking at once, one in each ear and one through the trumpet; sometimes two in the trumpet." So realistic were these experiences, he added, that "I often forgot that I was conversing with

those whom we ignorantly speak of as 'the dead'."

Mrs Wriedt paid five visits to Britain between 1911 and 1919. Count Chedo Miyatovich, a diplomat, was one of the sitters who attended a seance with her in London in May, 1912. He was accompanied by a London barrister, Dr Hinkovitch, who was told by Mrs Wriedt that the spirit of a woman was present, whispering the name Adela or Ada Mayell. This young woman, to whom he had been deeply attached, had died just three weeks earlier. The count takes up the story:

"Then, to my own and my Croatian friend's astonishment, a loud voice began to talk to him in the Croatian language. It was an old friend, a physician by profession, who died suddenly from heart disease. They continued for some time the conversation in their native tongue, of which I heard and understood every word."

Miss E. K. Harper, secretary to famous newspaper editor W. T. Stead, recorded 200 sittings with Mrs Wriedt. She often heard the voices in broad daylight. Other phenomena which occurred at these seances included luminous forms which glided about the darkened room.

Sometimes, it was reported, dogs would materialise in the room and bark. Flowers were taken from vases and placed in sitters' hands. And those sitters who were a little slow in responding to the voices were occasionally prodded by invisible fingers or rapped by the trumpet to urge a speedier reply.

While in England, Mrs Wriedt was also invited to Warwick Castle by the Dowager Duchess of Warwick, who had been the mistress of the late King Edward VII. The castle had been the scene of many strange manifestations and Lady Warwick hoped the American medium might be able to help.

Mrs Wriedt was shown to her room as soon as she arrived at the castle. While Lady Warwick was waiting for her guest to appear she noticed that the medium had brought her own seance trumpet with her and it was standing with other items of luggage outside her door. She picked it up and placed it to her ear. Immediately a familiar voice with a slight German accent spoke to her. It was the dead king.

Subsequently, during the seances which Mrs Wriedt held at the castle, King Edward was such a voluble, persis-

tent and possessive communicator that Lady Warwick decided to terminate the sessions.

Among those who also experienced the American woman's extraordinary powers was Sir William Barrett, who was Professor of Physics at the Royal College of Science for Dublin (1873-1910) and a prominent psychic researcher. At one of her seances he received a communication from Professor Henry Sidgwick, an eminent Cambridge scholar and the first president of the Society for Psychical Research.

The Dublin physicist was certain that, though Mrs Wriedt would have known his name, she would not have been aware that Sidgwick was afflicted by a bad stammer – and there was no sign of it in his speech. "Are you all right now?" Prof Barrett asked without referring to the stammering. The swift reply came: "You mean the impediment in my speech, but I do not stutter now."

Prof Barrett admitted: "I went to Mrs Wriedt's seances in a somewhat sceptical spirit, but I came to the conclusion that she is a genuine and remarkable medium, and has given abundant proof to others besides myself that the voices and the contents of the messages given are wholly beyond the range of trickery or collusion."

This was particularly so of the many foreign languages which were heard at her seances. In addition to Croatian, which has been mentioned, there are also records of Dutch, French, Spanish, Norwegian and Arabic being spoken.

Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of her mediumship was that it appeared to occur without effort on her part. Vice-Admiral Osborne Moore summed it up in these words:

"She does not fall into trance, and often joins in the conversation going on between the sitter and her spirit visitor; she speaks sometimes at the same instant as her control or the other spirits. I have been much puzzled to know what she has to do with the manifestations; all I am really sure about it is that her presence is essential."

Mrs Wriedt appears to have enjoyed communicating with the voices of the departed as much as her sitters . . . except when foreign languages were spoken. Knowing only English, it is said that when other tongues were spoken she would get out her knitting. α

BOOKS

LIFETIDE

Lyllal Watson

Hodder & Stoughton, £5.95

If you flip through the pages of *Lifetide*, you will find that each section is prefaced by a quote from Jung – a heavy clue to the thrust of Lyllal Watson's latest book, subtitled *A biology of the unconscious*.

He showed in his earlier books that he was a great welder together of ideas, as well as an entertaining writer. *Lifetide* lives up to the mark.

It's an ambitious book that spans the universe's history, from the big bang that started everything off to the emergence of life forms from the cosmic soup of chemicals through to the evolution of plant, animal and human life. On the way, he synthesises the latest theories of physicists, chemists, psychologists and biologists (of whose numbers he is one). Which in itself is a useful service for anyone without a scientific background who wants to understand the implications of current thinking. But the book is by no means just a description of the most up-to-date theories. It is also boldly speculative. This is where Watson's now characteristically unorthodox – to some, heretical – approach comes strongly to the fore.

He is not content to give intellectual shelf space to mainstream science alone, but ventures out to the fringe to include the bizarre, inexplicable and paranormal in his world picture. This is where problems arise because scientific method is incapable, according to Watson, of dealing with events that contradict the very laws upon which they are based.

"It is impossible to prove, in the normal scientific way, that such things do or don't happen. One is forced to take uncomfortable refuge in the notion that there are other realities, some of them far too delicate and mysterious for totally objective common sense."

Nonetheless, Watson insists on finding a place for them in his account of the scheme of things.

Since *Supernature*, which he described as the "natural history of the supernatural", he has gone much further into the unknown. While in the earlier book he was reporting the research and experiments of others, to *Lifetide*, he brings the added weight of personal experience.

In the intervening years he has witnessed the work of psychic surgeons in the Philippines, participated in Eastern rituals when, like the fakirs, he has walked through beds of red hot coals without suffering injury,

watched a young Venetian girl with the disturbing ability to turn tennis balls inside out and seen the extraordinary rapport which exists between native people and the natural world. All this is considered in *Lifetide*, and imaginatively reconciled with what is now known about the nature of the world around us.

What science gives us is not a definitive description of the world, but an approximation of reality. We are continually improving our accuracy in achieving finer measurements. So far, though, science has ignored the difficult and paradoxical aspects of life.

Watson's argument is that "... we have most to learn from the events that break the rules and fly in the face of the 'laws of nature' ". Despite the headache of tying down these events scientifically, he builds a framework that takes them into account. His is a bold, but plausible interpretation of the evidence.

He shows that while we have been able to establish the workings of many natural processes, the full explanation for many remains obstinately obscure. How does a flock of birds manage to wheel with such split-second, simultaneous precision? How does a cat find its way half way across the United States to its owner's home?

These are fractions of the *Lifetide* puzzle: that elusive something extra that holds things together. There are similar posers, although of a different order, where the human mind is concerned. Hypnotism, clairvoyance, telepathy and other psychic abilities suggest a deeper dimension of mind. If this swells out into a universal mind, linking not only mankind but the whole natural world, it could explain the universal communications system that throws up telepathic messages and other information from remote locations and enigmatic sources.

Watson attributes all paranormal phenomena to the unconscious. That goes for UFOs, ghosts, poltergeists and such bizarre effects as spoon-bending and tennis-ball everting. "I suggest that what we have in the field of paranormal phenomena, are vivid and sometimes meaningful indicators of the true state of our psyche." How the unconscious projects these unusual experiences is another question which, one supposes, could be the subject of the next book. Somehow or other the process is bound up with the movement of the lifetide that visibly ebbs and flows but remains, itself, invisible.

This book is a stimulating con-

tribution to the better understanding of that all-pervading force. It might stop short of the final answer. But, with Watson as guide, the exploration of the related issues is a richly rewarding experience.

David Harvey

PATHWAY TO THE GODS —

The mystery of the Andes Lines

Tony Morrison

Michael Russell, £5.95

This book is an expansion of Morrison's BBC TV *Chronicle* on Nascan and other Andes lines. A zoologist, Morrison has travelled many times to South America and in the course of his travels became puzzled by the long, straight ancient landscape lines that he encountered. In this book he describes previous filmwork which enabled him to discuss the problems of the Nascan lines (south of Lima in Peru) with their main researcher Maria Reiche and Smithsonian Professor Gerald Hawkins. Reiche has spent nearly half her life studying the enigmatic features formed on a plateau where wind can no longer affect the desert pavement and where rain hardly ever falls. Marks made there are permanent. The age of the lines, ranging from a few feet to half a mile in width, are unknown, but evidence suggests 1500 to 2000 years. They run straight over hill and gully for up to 10km. Their purpose is equally unknown. Morrison records Hawkins' survey of the lines to see if they are astronomically significant: the majority of them aren't.

The rest of Morrison's book describes, in an easy and pleasant style, his searches elsewhere in the Andes area for clues to the purpose of straight lines laid down so long ago. A Scottish engineer, extremely *au fait* with the Peruvian pampas, directs Morrison's attention to other ancient alignments far removed from Nasca: lines of cairns, faint straight tracks running up hills, and bold isolated lines on deserts hundreds of miles away. In Lima he learns of an old Spanish text which leads him to Cusco in search of *ceques*, apparently former alignments of holy places of *wak'as* obliquely referred to by the Spanish missionaries. The lines no longer exist, if they ever did, on the ground, and Morrison's attempts there to align churches and ancient shrines are reminiscent of ley hunting activities!

But it is in Bolivia where Morrison finds sets of visible, straight lines running over plains, mountains and rivers for distances up to 20 miles, and it is this material which makes Morrison's book so

uniquely valuable. From aerial photographs taken as part of Bolivia's huge new survey, Morrison and friends scour the western *altiplano* region of Bolivia for the lines. And they are there in abundance, linking village churches with nearby sacred hills, linking ancient Indian shrines, criss-crossing at the foot of hills, stretching straight and inexplicably for miles. No one seems to know their origins, and only the older Indians still tend them, the younger ones have little interest in the lines. Consequently, some of them are growing over with bushes and disappearing: Morrison's record comes just in time.

There is no discernible fundamental difference between this extant linear system and Alfred Watkins' ley system which postulated a prehistoric system of old straight tracks. Yet Watkins arrived at his theory through a study of Herefordshire: are we witnessing some disturbing coincidence, or are both Morrison and Watkins referring to remains which indicate a common response by early human beings to stimuli or concepts ignored or unknown by our modern, essentially urban culture?

Interestingly, the first references to the Bolivian lines were as paths, by an anthropologist in the late 1920s. Why has no archaeologist brought them to the general attention in all these decades? Because of the ignored but festering sore of Watkins' heresy? It is certain that the revealed fact of the Bolivian lines will colour all future discussion of leys and prehistoric landscape lines in general.

Buy this book, treasure it and make a special place for it in your bookshelf.

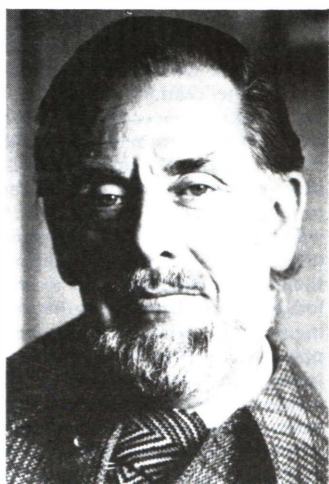
Paul Devereux

DICTIONARY OF THE SUPERNATURAL

George G. Harrap, £5.50

"... almost any intelligent person," says Peter Underwood in his introduction "is prepared to consider the evidence for hidden forces that would, not many years ago, have been dismissed out of hand." That intelligent person would also be aware that much of the history of the supernatural and paranormal is shot through with fraud, deception and trickery. But the author has grasped the nettle. There is no attempt to fob the reader off with a whitewashed account of the subject. Where there is chicanery, suspected or proven, he says so. Thus the potted histories of mediums contained under the entry *Spiritualism* are served up with the less savoury episodes

BOOKS



Peter Underwood ... from acupuncture to Zombies.

intact, among the more remarkable cases like the following.

Robert J. Lees' graphic dream of a murderer at the time when Jack the Ripper's bloody exploits were at their height remains a provocative argument for psychic revelation. Lees subsequently saw the man in his dream on a bus, followed him to what turned out to be the home of a distinguished physician and informed the police. The doctor was subsequently stopped while leaving the house and found to be carrying a carving knife in his bag. Following his confinement to a mental home, the murders ceased.

The *Dictionary* is not just concerned with Spiritualism and the supernatural in a narrow sense. It provides a wide-ranging reference book on the many subjects which are variously categorised as psychic, occult, paranormal or simply as mysteries and the unexplained.

You will find entries on the Cabalah, or Qabalah if you prefer, cats, crossroads, cartomancy and clairaudience among the 40 "C"s.

Anyone who wants a useful summary of the essence of subjects from the Aberdeen witches and acupuncture to Zombies, will find this a handy book. Rather comfortably, the book ends on a happy note, with the story of Eleonore Zugun. After a poltergeist-tormented childhood, she grew up to be a normal woman with her own hairdressing business. It is a pity that space prevented the author adding more than a token couple of books for further reading, though.

David Harvey

A DOOR TO ETERNITY
Proving the Christos Experience
G. M. Glaskin
Wildwood House, £6.95
This book is the last in a trilogy

about the Christos technique, a strange ritual whereby one can be wafted back into consciousness of a past life or, at the least, a very lucid dream. As I found the first book (*Windows of the Mind*) stretched the subject matter further than it could comfortably go without inducing tedium in the reader (me), I approached the third book with no little scepticism. What else was there to say about Christos?

Well, Glaskin, an Australian novel writer, is a devotee of the technique and I now have no doubt that he could fill ten volumes on the subject. But each, as with his third attempt, would involve no little repetition.

Glaskin has to describe for us again, as in the earlier two books, just how the Christos experience works. It involves a "subject" being massaged on the ankles and in the third eye area and being asked to carry out certain complex memory and visualisation tasks until, presto, he finds himself floating down from on high to alight on some foreign terrain of yesteryear. Then, while perfectly conscious of himself lying on a living room floor somewhere surrounded by his friends, the subject can also experience and describe what is happening to him at some moment in the past. Glaskin's own first trip took him back to ancient Egypt where he saw himself as some kind of community leader, working with extremely primitive hieroglyphics.

Much of this third book is about Glaskin's determined attempt to go to Egypt and verify the possibility that his vision could have been true. With a zest for detail which would be impossibly boring for the reader, were it not for Glaskin's childlike excitement and conviction that everything is just one amazing coincidence after another, he tracks through Egyptian terrain, museums and ancient tomes to discover that everything could have happened just as he saw it. We also end up driving round Lewes with Glaskin and fascinated friends looking for non-existent street names in an effort to verify someone else's Christos experience.

But then it really gets boring. Glaskin decides he has to tune into his ordinary dreams if he is going to make any further sense of the Christos form of dreaming. So he starts keeping a dream diary, to which we are treated – nearly 30 pages of description and explanation. Then follow more Christos experiences and a general summing up of what it can all be about.

And what can it all be about? I'm still not sure, as Glaskin's

material on reincarnation and dreaming, produced from ancient and modern times, doesn't seem to be leading anywhere to me. Still, he concludes that there is a superior maker of all dreams and that the Christos experience is of origin divine. Indeed, the last few pages are a virtual eulogy of God and creation.

I have tried the Christos experience myself and failed and am the first, therefore, to admit I'd need some convincing. But, for me, this book wouldn't do it. Glaskin has become a fervent, over-zealous preacher and I fear he loses more than he gains by this particularly tough-minded approach.

Denise Winn

MYSTERIES

Colin Wilson

Hodder & Stoughton, £9.95

Dipping into Colin Wilson's latest book – which is described as an attempt to write the *Principia* of psychic science – is like getting caught in a fast-moving river.

Wilson is like a whirlpool at its centre, dragging you in ever-decreasing circles towards the heart of the matter in a way that is often overwhelming. There were times when I felt the need to strike out against the current and swim for dry land, for fear of drowning. But it was not long before I was enticed back to the exciting but perilous waters.

The whirlpool analogy can be applied in another way, too. For Wilson gives the impression of being a literary whirlpool: a man with an insatiable appetite for the printed word and the ability to regurgitate almost everything he has read in a way that seems to form a pattern, though one suspects that not all the pieces fit as well as he would have us believe. (There are 226 books listed in his bibliography.)

The early part of this 667-page tome leans very heavily on the ideas and writings of Tom Lethbridge, who died in 1971. Wilson found in his books "a first-rate intelligence that combined scept-



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BOOKS

ticism with imagination and a sense of humour", and shares much of Lethbridge's work and theories with us. But he admits that "there is nothing in his books to make an open-minded scientist start revising his view of the universe."

Mysteries is an ambitious project and it succeeds in conveying a sense of excitement at the profound discoveries which seem to be waiting for us just beneath the surface, in the realms of the paranormal. Nevertheless, the book has its blemishes. For me the most infuriating is Wilson's insistence on using the term "Faculty X" to describe a variety of experiences which can loosely be defined as the ability suddenly to grasp the reality of other times and places.

I realise that no other term was readily available, but Faculty X seems to bring a rather special ability down to the realms of magical washing powder ingredients which give a whiter-than-white appearance to wash-day greys.

Nor did Wilson's extensive study of alchemy, which he describes as "the epitome of the psychic sciences", leave an impression on me, apart from confirming my view that there

are many other avenues of knowledge I would rather explore. But, of course, no book which attempts to be all-embracing could ignore alchemy.

I found Wilson most interesting when he dealt with modern times and present-day mysteries, such as UFOs. Drawing on the work and experiences of several well-known writers and researchers, he makes a penetrating



Colin Wilson . . . an attempt to write the *Principia* of psychic science. (Photo: Mark Gerson)

observation about many strange phenomena.

He does so after quoting the view of writer John Keel that alleged space entities, including one with whom he had had lengthy telephone conversations, were "living - or existing - only so long as they could feed off the energy and minds of mediums and contactees".

Wilson remarks: "This comment suggests a startling new interpretation not just of UFO phenomena, but of the whole history of spiritualism. Something is certainly going on, but probably not what has so far been thought. Half the spirits contacted by mediums are not what they profess to be, but are merely the tramps, con-men and petty crooks of the spirit world, doing their best to swindle human beings out of a little vital energy."

If you like your books to be controversial and stimulating, then *Mysteries* is a must. But make sure the whirlpool doesn't drag you under too quickly.

Roy Stemma

THE AMITYVILLE HORROR

Jay Anson
Panbooks, 80p

The trouble with *The Amityville Horror* is that there is not the

slightest reason contained within its covers why anyone should believe one word of it. It could, for all the reader knows, be a fashionable concoction distilled from horror movies, science fiction and some of the more traditional psychical research literature.

The writer describes the plight of George and Kathleen Lutz and their children, enmeshed in the toils of a peculiarly nasty haunting - cum - possession - cum - poltergeist case. A Catholic priest, "Father Mancuso" who comes to bless their new home (where quite recently a man had murdered his father, mother and brothers and sisters) finds himself afflicted with - among other ailments - incipient stigmata.

There are apparitions and vanishings, giant footprints in the snow, levitations of objects and persons, transfigurations, ooziings of slime, paranormal scents and stenches, voices, noises, malfunctionings of apparatus, heat and cold disturbances and an all-pervading crescendo of malaise, irritation and terror: in short nothing much that cannot be found in reasonably well authenticated cases.

Although Jay Anson is cited as the author, two additional

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BOOKS

copyright holders are George and Kathleen Lutz who, as several TV interviewers have pointed out, have a considerable financial stake in the promotion of the story which seems all set for TV and movie presentation.

If all – or any – of the contents of the book are true, why did not at least "Father Mancuso" give his proper name and add his testimony? If, as George Lutz said in the course of the BBC "Tonight" programme's recording in which I took part (though this was cut out of the final version), several serious parapsychological institutions were involved and senior officials impressed, why are there no details, apart from the dropping of the names of a couple of relatively junior researchers, whose reactions are not given?

In view of all this, why waste ink and paper on *Amityville*? If I am to be honest, I must reply something to the effect that, having met George and Kathleen Lutz (if that is their name) I am not fully persuaded that they could or would have made it all up. If they did have even some of the experiences that are described, these deserved proper treatment: they could shed much needed light on the phenomena of psychical research and their psychopathology – perhaps "socio-pathology" would be more appropriate; on the psychology of possession; and on the history of witch-hunting and demonology which remains to be reconsidered with the possibility of an element of physical and psychical paranormality in mind.

If "Father Mancuso" suffered as described, he has confreres in, for example, the four priests involved in the Loudun exorcisms who did worse: three died in convulsions and one went insane for years.

The moral of the story is to publish scholarly accounts first and pop versions later: but that, of course, depends on one's priorities.

Anita Gregory

SEARCH FOR HARRY PRICE

Trevor H. Hall
Duckworth, £7.95

A book by Trevor Hall, particularly one on psychical research or matters relating to that subject, is always of interest to those who have followed his literary career.

Almost 20 years ago the present reviewer suggested that Dr Hall would have done well as a writer of fiction, for he presents conjecture in such an intriguing fashion that the reader could be forgiven for turning it into fact in his own mind. We are, therefore, faced yet again with a book which has the stamp of research and archival expertise.

Those who take the trouble to look closely at the facts supporting Dr Hall's thesis – in this case that Harry Price was a flamboyant creator of myth about himself and the evidence for his psychical inquiries – will find weak scholarship and a righteous indignation that weakens both Harry Price's already dubious character and Dr Hall's competence as an historian.

Harsh comment, no doubt, but the publications of the Society for Psychical Research, as one example, with authors of differing opinion, tend to support the statement.

The theme of the book under review might be set out as follows: Harry Price concealed his humble origins, married money, and created a myth about his family background, hiding his erstwhile careers in archaeology and numismatics (in both instances suspect), and went on to put psychical research into popular journalism, with little concern for the scientific spirit. All this is true – but the psychology of motive and the supportive evidence are mixed in with speculation of the wildest kind.

Dr Hall rightly condemns poor scholarship in research but is in his own way party to similar behaviour. He makes free with references to reviewers who have accepted his findings in general, notably with Harry Price, but is clearly reluctant to admit his own research weaknesses.

A curious feature of Dr Hall's present work is that there seems from the text to have been little or no attempt to make contact with Mrs Harry Price's family. Another weakness is that while Dr Hall has produced on the surface somewhat convincing evidence to show that Price's father seduced his wife, when she was under 16, and he was old enough to know better, the attempt to dig a little further into the facts was missed. Dr Hall makes great play of his inquiries in archival research and he has undertaken considerable research in association with others.

Unfortunately, in the case of Price's early life, particularly, it would appear that this apparently impressive research depends largely on the work of others, and one rather doubts whether Dr Hall ever did, or any of his colleagues did, examine the Census Returns in London for the periods of 1861 and 1871 which would have established a lot more detail about Price's father's family background and so give confirmation to the sordid facts which may after all have been less squalid than Dr Hall makes them out to be.

The book is also, quite cor-

rectly, critical of the late Paul Tabori, Price's literary executor, who wrote an earlier biography of Price. Tabori drew from the make-believe and contradictory facts as written by Price in his various books. But Dr Hall is weak in his own attempts to substantiate matters of family which could have been drawn from Mrs Price and some of Price's close friends who are still alive.

Indeed, when discussing one of Price's secretaries, it did not occur to Dr Hall to seek out her surviving family – particularly her son, who is personally known to the reviewer. It is one thing to drop any number of names, whose views on Price may be correct or otherwise, but it is another when such persons were only acquainted with one aspect of his career.

Most readers of this review will agree that Price concocted much of the dubious phenomena associated with Borley Rectory, the Bloksberg Tryst where one was to witness the transformation of a goat into a handsome lover for a maiden pure of heart,

and other notorious events. Whether he "framed" Rudi Schneider, the great Austrian medium, is debatable, but Price's own legacy to psychical research, as Dr Hall admits, is the library he left to London University.

While Dr Hall picks out some errors in Price's competence as a librarian, the suggestion that he may have removed valuable books from the library of the Society for Psychical Research is fanciful. Flamboyant and journalistic, prone to giving a good story without scientific spirit, as he was, Price had access to money to build up a magnificent collection of books and documents. He was a generous man, but not prone to robbery. (It is from this library that much of Dr Hall's story is put together – and he is thus in deep debt to A. H. Wesenraft, who cares for the collection, for offering the wonderful facility of access to a host of material.)

We in psychical research are well-aware of the weaknesses in Price's character and his concoctions of tales for the public's thirst. We are also aware that he

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BOOKS

did much for the subject. He needed both family and academic stature; he was without these and so manufactured stories about himself, as he did wonders in the dark room and elsewhere.

A really researched study of Price might better his character as a rejoinder to Dr Hall. In the case of Edmund Gurney and his colleagues, who have suffered in another book by Dr Hall, such a work is now in progress – but I do not think the man in the street, if not in psychical research, really cares very much about Price's father's miserable life as a grocer or salesman. Price produced exciting stories: take those stories away and there is nothing left but a shadow and a plate of irrelevant gossip which will not obliterate the legacy of a library, as Dr Hall will agree.

Mostyn Gilbert

Do you need a reply?

We would like to thank all those readers who have written to comment on the first issue of *Alpha*. Many of the letters contained congratulations, constructive criticism and contributions (a selection of readers' letters appears on Page 31). It is not possible to send a personal acknowledgement to each writer. But every letter is read and its contents noted. Those readers who do want a reply, however, are asked to send a stamped addressed envelope.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Centenary celebrations this year for The National Spiritualist Association of Churches, USA. It is to mark one hundred years of existence with a programme of public events and lectures in July.

* * *

This June sees the XI International Meeting of Parapsychology, which takes place in Milan, Italy. Its subject is "Comparative Parapsychology, Psychotronics and Theology."

* * *

The use of acupuncture in hospital trials was featured on a BBC TV news broadcast in February. Arthritic patients were shown being treated by the ancient method of inserting needles into specific parts of the body. Dr David Dowson of Poole General Hospital, Dorset, told his interviewer that he believed acupuncture should be available on the National Health Service.

* * *

The third International SPR Conference on psychical research took place at the University of Edinburgh from April 2-4. A report will appear in the next issue of *Alpha*.

* * *

A temple has been found in Italy as a result of teamwork between a psychic, Umberto Di Grazia, and archaeologists. According to the American newspaper, *National Enquirer*, Di Grazia dreamed he was a warrior preparing for battle many centuries ago. Later while walking in

woods he was psychically drawn to ruins which he knew was the place he had seen in his dream. Later he led archaeologists to a temple where various items of the Danubian period, previously unknown in Italy, were discovered.

* * *

Nella Jones, the Bexleyheath psychic, has signed a £1250 contract with Japan's Yomiuri Telecasting Corporation. The Japanese TV company is making a programme about her and she will pay a 13-day visit to that country. Japanese interest centres on her reported ability to solve crimes with her clairvoyant powers. She helped British police by giving a vital clue during their investigation of a £2 million art theft.

* * *

The intriguing case of the Pollock sisters, Joanna and Jacqueline, who were killed by a car and then apparently reincarnated as twins Gillian and Jennifer, to the same parents, was featured on television in February. American researcher Professor Ian Stevenson, an expert on reincarnation, called it the most outstanding case he has investigated in Europe.

* * *

Fortean Times, the excellent quarterly magazine which records strange phenomena in the tradition of Charles Fort, is to change its name and format. Editor Robert Rickard has announced that as from the next issue it will have a larger page size (A4 – the

same as *Alpha*) and will be called *Strange Phenomena*.

* * *

The committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal has established a laboratory at the State University of New York at Buffalo, USA, to test unexamined paranormal claims. According to the *Parapsychology Foundation's Parapsychology Review* (Vol 9, No. 5), controlled testing has ruled out some claims of card-guessing, precognition and remote-viewing.

* * *

A 46-year-old Washington State University anthropologist, Grover Krantz, believes that Bigfoot – the legendary "abominable snowman" of America's northwest – really exists. And he hopes to prove it by capturing one.

More than 1000 people claim to have seen Bigfoot. He has been filmed and plastercasts have been made of enormous footprints in the forest areas of Washington State.

It is the footprints which most impress Mr Krantz. "To fake them it would have taken a brilliant anatomist with a very inventive mind... and we haven't had one of those around since Leonardo da Vinci."

ON THE MOVE?

Are you about to move house? If so, and you are an *Alpha* subscriber, be sure to notify our Subscriptions Department so that your copies of *Alpha* can be re-directed to your new address.

What to do if you see a UFO

IF YOU see a strange object in the sky which you are satisfied is not of man-made or natural origin, what should you do? You could call the police or even the nearest military or Air Force base. In this way, your report is logged at the time it occurred.

But ultimately it is the civilian UFO groups who are likely to show the most interest in what you have seen. The British UFO Research Association (write to The Secretary, 6 Cairn Avenue, London W5 5HX for membership details) has a nationwide team of investigators but before their local representative contacts you they will want to see a completed sighting report, to gauge the importance of the event.

You will need to record the time you saw the UFO, the duration of the sighting, the direction in which it was travelling, the angle above the horizon and the apparent size of the object compared with, for example, a pinhead, golf ball or tennis ball held at arm's length. All are

easy to ascertain while the UFO is being observed, or immediately afterwards, but difficult to recall accurately days later.

BUFORA will also ask for a drawing of the UFO and a detailed description of its appearance and movements. The sighting form ends with a request for meteorological and astronomical information at the time of the sighting. And, of course, if there were other witnesses to the UFO, you will naturally have had the presence of mind to get their names and addresses.

If, when BUFORA has studied your report, it is impressed enough to conduct further investigation you will be contacted by a local researcher. That person, to use the association's own description, will have "the qualities of tact, perseverance, and a good deal of initiative and commonsense".

The investigator will also be fully conversant with BUFORA's 140-page investigator's manual, the only detailed work

of its kind produced in the UK. This not only helps the investigator glean more information from UFO witnesses but also gives him guidance on how sightings can be evaluated, using the experts who belong to the nationwide investigation network.

Eventually, when your UFO report has been analysed, checked and scrutinised by the "professionals" it may be listed as an unknown – that is, a genuine unidentified flying object which cannot be explained. But the chances are that BUFORA will find that what you saw has a natural explanation.

BUFORA's statistics show that out of 1372 reports in their files for the 20-year period from 1949-1969, 133 sightings were of satellites, 99 were balloons, 235 were celestial objects, 88 were meteorological and natural phenomena, 287 were aircraft, 102 were other miscellaneous objects, 283 did not have sufficient data for identification, and only 145 were classified as UFOs. *α*

ALPHA FILE

Continued from Page 20

which took the mystery out of Mars and the romance out of Venus, have done is to show beyond reasonable doubt that they are not only uninhabited but uninhabitable. This is quite a shock, not at a conscious but an unconscious level."

So the UFO sightings are simply a result of unfulfilled expectations, profound disappointment with the unsuccessful search for life elsewhere in the universe.

Although Watson has been at the centre of many extraordinary events, several of which he talks about in *Lifetide*, he has not been influenced by his experience to the extent where he has adopted a particular set of beliefs. He remains a nomad, an intellectual wanderer. "If I believe in anything at all, it is Shintoism which sees life in everything." He retains, above all, the free-wheeling independence of the disinterested observer. Perhaps for this reason Watson distrusts commitment. "People who are committed tend to be very restricted in their attitudes and approach to these things. Once you have an attitude that hardens, it leads nowhere." While accepting the validity of his experience, he has resisted jumping to conclusions, especially those dictated by rigid dogma. He is very impressed with the evidence provided by some mediums, but nonetheless rejects the interpretation of that as proof of survival after death or the existence of spirit. "It is better to see it in the light of something bigger and more encompassing like a collective, biological unconscious."

Where does Watson go next? As with every book he has written, he waits for the feedback that allows him to check and re-evaluate his ideas. In the immediate future he will be following up a new study of the whale and dolphin family. But where the work that has culminated in *Lifetide* will lead remains to be seen.

"I'm not planning my life any more. It just goes and however it goes is fine by me. I have no vested interest in its outcome and that means that I'm not hedging my bets in any way. I'm not investing in the possibility of life after death by taking up a formal religion. But I'm not fatalistic about it either. I don't think it is predestined. I think one has free choices at every point.

"But I am happy to allow that choice to be made as freely as possible and to follow whichever strange gods call for as long as I hear them call." α

Hypnotism

IF MOST people think of hypnotism as an entertainer's trick, the technique is being taken far more seriously by doctors, therapists – even by the police. Exactly how hypnotism works is still a mystery.

What is certain is its powerful effect. It can release suppressed memories. It may help people to conquer their complexes. For these reasons, it is gaining increased respect from a number of professional quarters.

Many qualified medical and dental practitioners and hypnotherapists without formal training use it to treat physical and mental illnesses and lesser problems such as smoking habits, overeating or difficulties associated with anxiety.

While hypnotic powers are by no means restricted to qualified medical and dental practitioners, there is some concern among them that hypnotherapy is widely practised by the unqualified. The official British Medical Association view is that, providing a qualified doctor has made the diagnosis and takes full responsibility for the effect of the treatment on his patient, a referral to an unqualified hypnotherapist is permissible.

But Dr Waxman, spokesman for the British Society of Medical and Dental Hypnosis, claims that hypnotism used as psychotherapy by the unqualified practitioner could dangerously aggravate the condition of an unstable patient. The society, he says, also objects to the use of hypnotic powers by those who are not bound by a professional code of ethics. Despite these objections, many doctors who do not themselves practise hypnotism do refer patients to hypnotherapists for problems such as alcoholism, obesity, anxiety and depression.

Does hypnotherapy work? As a sceptic, I asked Anthony Jones of the Psychotherapy and Hypnosis Consultancy about his success rate and the methods he uses. Success, he said, required a patient who was willing to come to terms with his problem, not just as it appeared on the surface but as it was revealed once the hypnotist had used his skill to delve beneath superficial impressions.

All treatment by hypnosis, he said, started with the hypnotist's use of basic psychoanalysis techniques to help the patient to recognise and work through the beneath-the-surface confusion which often formed a subconscious barrier between the person's conscious aims and desires and his or her achievement of them.

The smoker who wants to give up the habit may find that his smoking has become associated with all kinds of stress situations. The businessman, while in a hypnotic trance, may recall that he always lights up a cigarette when he wants to avoid or postpone executive decision making, difficult phone calls or meetings. The harassed housewife may find that she associates smoking with relaxation and reward for her labours. Having pinpointed the patient's particular problem in this way the hypnotist can then suggest alternative, less harmful ways for the patient to cope with the set of circumstances which normally lead to lighting a cigarette.

I decided to try the effects of positive thought myself, and Anthony Jones agreed to hypnotise me to help me pass my driving test. I was mildly surprised at the ease with which I found myself relaxing and agreeing with him that my eyelids could not open, try as I might to budge them. I was also surprised that I could hear him quite clearly, and could hear myself answering the questions he was asking me.

We had little time at our disposal but we did manage to establish a few of the possible reasons why the thought of another driving test keeps me awake at night. He then went

through the whole experience stage by stage, suggesting to me that I would feel relaxed and competent and would pass with no trouble. He brought me quickly out of the trance, which he agreed was induced by the extension of the kind of mind over matter techniques used in yoga and meditation. He pointed out that it was perfectly possible to use the state between sleeping and waking for self-hypnosis, to reduce aggression or cope with other everyday stresses.

I have yet to discover whether Mr Jones' powers of positive suggestion, or my own, will get me through the driving test, but hypnotism does seem to improve performance at motor skills. Mr Jones claims that his clients include several sportsmen who will bear this out, as well as the odd executive who is grateful for the improvement in his golf swing. Concentration, too, seems to be improved, probably by the removal of these pre-exam nerves.

My brief "hypnotic experience" certainly left me convinced that, with the right guidance, most of us could uncover much more of what is going on in our heads than we are aware of at present.

Sheila Hart

Footnote: Our contributor passed her driving test.

LETTERS

Letters for publication should be kept as short and concise as possible. The Editors reserve the right to shorten letters. If your letter is not typed, please ensure your name is in block letters. Only letters containing a SAE can be answered.

Superb

May I offer my sincere congratulations on ALPHA – I think the first number is superb!
C. Maxwell Cade, London, NW6

Welcome

I welcome the emergence of *Alpha* as the most interesting journal I have read in a lifetime as a free-thinker and 20 years as a confirmed Spiritualist.
Arnold Phelps, Welling, Kent.

Long overdue

Amongst all the available literature on the bookshelves today, I know of none which deals with the paranormal in a scientific manner and yet in a way that can be understood by the layman. Until now.

Considering the general interest in the subject (and ignorance), it is surprising that it has taken so long for a magazine like *Alpha* to hit the bookshelves. I hope that sales will prove me right in saying that there is a long overdue need for such a magazine.

For my own part, please accept my thanks not just for producing *Alpha*, but for getting it right. It would have been so easy to have leaned over just a little on the side of the sheep, or to have gone the other way and finished up with a dry and factual science quarterly. But you didn't and I'm happy to repeat, you got it just right.

B. R. Oldham, Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottingham

Impossible to avoid?

In common with everyone else I have no knowledge of the physical mechanics of premonitions, but as an open-minded sceptic I can accept that they do occur. Whatever their nature – be it spiritual, electro-magnetic,

LETTERS

time-warp, or quantum mechanics – surely at Aberfan, for example, it was the trauma of 140 unexpected, sudden and violent deaths that communicated itself to the “premonitors”, not the movement of black sludge.

If it were otherwise, every near-miss non-event would be the subject of endless premonitions so commonplace as to be totally un-noteworthy.

To get to my Catch-22 point: if by acting on a premonition the event foretold is itself significantly changed (i.e., Aberfan is evacuated) the event must be deprived of the spiritual or whatever power to leap backwards through the frontiers of time and consciousness, and could therefore no longer manifest itself as a premonition in the first place.

Lawrence Edwards, Woldingham, Surrey CR3 7LA

Telepathic roots?

Nowadays it would seem that the word “occult” has become almost synonymous with weird, spooky and even frightening. These connotations are mainly intensified by the attitudes of the non-scientific media.

Whilst realising that it may be more lucrative and perhaps appear to be more exciting to go off in a tangent direction, this attitude does not help any non-academic to take a serious interest in what is potentially a very exciting subject indeed.

May I say that I have enjoyed very much the first edition of *Alpha* and hope for many more issues as interesting as this one.

As my own particular interest is mainly in telepathy, to my mind the most easily proven of all the branches of (for want of a better word) the paranormal, I would like to enter a plea for the very ordinariness of it, and consider how we use the very roots of it every day of our lives, without perhaps being aware of it.

If we are to accept the Darwinian theory of the evolution of man, then we may accept the idea that the means of communication has also evolved from primitive beginnings. Suppose, therefore, that we still retain some knowledge of these, through racial memory or whatever means. Although our present means of communication, through the spoken or written word, could be considered the ultimate, it must be admitted that

this is not always adequate to convey meaning.

Take for instance the ordinary sentence “How nice to see you.” The number of permutations of different meanings which can be read into this must be quite considerable. The inflexions of the voice, facial expression, even small manifestations of what Desmond Morris has called “body language” will convey a meaning. These may be “received” by the person addressed, and are sometimes acknowledged in a similar manner. These interchanges of meaning may be interpreted as very simple telepathic messages. The inflexions and gestures may be rudiments of earlier communication systems.

This theme may be developed further. For instance people who know each other very well may suddenly begin to say the same thing. People who have never met before may suddenly find that they have something in common. This may not be what is often called “chemistry” between people, but rather a fundamental telepathic exchange.

(Mrs) E. M. Reece, Colby, Isle of Man

Short but sweet . . .

Well done!

Brian Inglis, London, NW3

Wrong-twist

In your first issue, “A new twist to metal-bending” was possibly a more apt description of our experiments with strain gauges embedded in suspended metal pieces than was intended. Perhaps a line of print was missing, giving the impression that “signals alone with no visible distortion” is “something which occurs relatively rarely, perhaps one in five sessions”.

In fact, it is the permanent deformations which are relatively rare, perhaps one in five sessions.

Prof J. B. Hasted, Department of Physics, Birkbeck College, London, WC1E 7HX

Unconvincing

I could wish that the case for the paranormal, another dimension, call it what you will (our vocabulary is *ex hypothesi* inadequate) were not so often spoilt by presentation that to an elderly lawyer is inept.

Take your article about the late Mr Spriggs. According to the dates given, at the time of the Cardiff manifestations he was between 27 and 29, leaving for Australia at the age of 30. Yet it is said that in this series of seances a Negro carried Spriggs’ grandson

into the garden. Grandson? Work it out.

It is also said that the seances were held in Lewis’s home. Even if Spriggs had managed a grandson by the age of 30, why was the child in someone else’s house to sleep?

Turning to the article on the pilot who never came back, I find the basic premise so improbable as to make the rest unconvincing in the extreme. My flying experience in powered aircraft is small and limited to this country but I would not expect flying in Australia to be organised so very differently from here.

In England, to get a private pilot’s licence not less than about 40 hours flying is called for, so a man who has done 150 hours, while he should be competent, is still pretty raw. If my memory serves, you need some 700 hours for a commercial licence.

Be that as it may, it is quite unthinkable that a club in this country would allow a man to take off for his “first taste of night flying”, solo (i.e. no instructor) for a flight of some 170 miles of which at least 60 would be over open sea. He would do circuits and bumps with an instructor before any cross country (much less cross sea) flight at night.

The work load of flying on instruments and navigating, presumably by radio aids, would be heavy enough for an experienced pilot on his own. I doubt if anyone who managed to escape the proper routine and slope off on his own could cope.

I know the sea a lot better than I know flying and it has swallowed many things a lot bigger than a Cessna 180 without trace.

Getting the evidence right is never easy.

J. C. Trenchard, Falmouth, Cornwall

Congratulations

I have just finished reading the first issue of *Alpha* and feel that I must write and offer you my congratulations. It is rare to find a popular magazine which deals with the paranormal in such a sensible and well-balanced manner. Indeed, the aims which you outline in your editorial seem to me to be very similar to those of the Society for Psychical Research itself, which also seeks to investigate ostensibly paranormal events in an impartial and scientific manner.

Unfortunately, most of the popular magazines dealing with these topics set out to be sensational rather than accurate. *Alpha* therefore provides a much-needed corrective to this tendency.

J. L. Randall, Warwick

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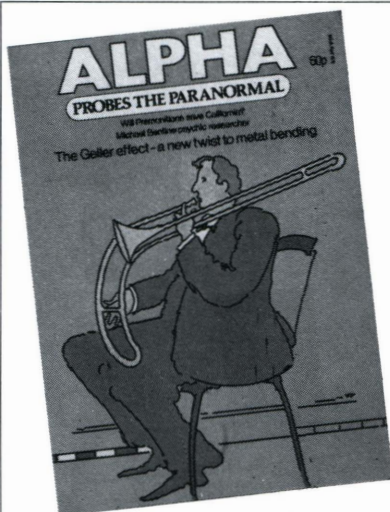
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